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"LET THE LION OF VEDANTA ROAR"

VOL. XIX

MAY 1932—APRIL



PUBLISHED BY

**SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH,**  
MYLAPORE, MADRAS.

Inland annually, Rs. 3.

Foreign annually, Rs. 4-8.

Single Copy, As. 6

(\$ 2 or Sh. 8.)

EDITORS: SWAMI YATISWARANANDA AND SWAMI TAPASYANANDA.

PUBLISHER: SWAMI HRISHIKESHANANDA.

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"Let the lion of Vedanta roar"

Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XIX]

MAY 1932

[No. 1

## HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।  
नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैवमाप्नुयात् ॥  
आत्मानं रयिनं विद्धि शरीरं रयमेव तु ।  
बुद्धिं तु सारयि विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥  
इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान् ।  
आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥  
यस्त्वविज्ञानवान्भवत्ययुक्तेन मनसा सदा ।  
तस्येन्द्रियाण्यवश्यानि दुष्टाश्च इव सारथेः ॥  
यस्तु विज्ञानवान्भवति युक्तेन मनसा सदा ।  
तस्येन्द्रियाणि वश्यानि सदश्वा इव सारथेः ॥

He who has not first turned away from wickedness, who is not tranquil and subdued, or whose mind is not at rest can never realise the Self even by knowledge.

Know the Self to be the Master sitting in the chariot, the body to be the chariot, the intellect the charioteer, and the mind the reins.

The senses are called the horses, and the sense-objects their roads. The wise call the Self the enjoyer, when He is united with the body, senses and mind.

To one who is always of unrestrained mind and devoid of right understanding, the senses become unmanageable like the vicious horses of a charioteer.

But to one who is always of restrained mind and has right understanding, the senses are under control like the good horses of a charioteer.

KATHA UPANISHAD

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

THE MASTER IN BHAVA MUKHA\*

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।

मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि ॥

तिभिर्गुणमयैर्भावैरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।


मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥

"Know all states pertaining to Satva, Rajas and Tamas, as proceeding from Me alone. Still I am not in them, but they are in Me."

"Deluded by these states, the modifications of the three Gunas, all this world does not know Me, who is beyond them and immutable."

Bh. Gita Ch. VII. 12. 13.

## *The deep Significance of Sri Ramakrishna's Teachings*

 YOUR readers are already aware that at the end of his unique superhuman Sadhanas, covering a period of twelve years, the Divine Mother commanded Sri Ramakrishna to remain in Bhava Mukha. And he accordingly did so. But it is very difficult to understand oneself, and convince others of, the deep significance of Bhava Mukha and the glory of dwelling in that exalted state.

Years back, once Swami Vivekananda told a friend, "Basing on each and every saying of Sri Rama-

krishna it is possible to write cart-loads of philosophical books."

"Really?" asked the friend, "But we do not apprehend such depths of thoughts in his teachings. Will you please take up any of his sayings and explain?"

*Swamiji*: "You do not, because you have not the power to understand. Very well, pick up any saying of the Master and I will explain."

*Friend*: "All right. Please explain to me the parable of the 'Elephant God and the Driver God' in which the Master speaks of realising Narayana in all."

---

\* A highly mystical state of Spiritual Consciousness in which the realised soul is in tune with, and also identified with, the Cosmic or Universal Mind. It lies on the borderland of the Transcendental or Absolute Consciousness—the One without a second—and may be said to be the very threshold of relative "Cosmic Consciousness" in which the many are looked upon as manifestations of the One Immanent Principle. In this spiritual state all beings and all things appear to be bundles of ideas, all forming parts of an organic whole—the Cosmic Mind. And these thought forms are permeated by the One Spiritual Principle, the Sat-Chit-Ananda—the Infinite Existence-Intelligence-Bliss—whose Divine Effulgence is manifested brightly or dimly in some of these, or apparently hidden in others.

Swamiji at once took up the topic and for three successive days explained it to him in simple words. In this connection he took up the various problems that have been agitating the minds of scholars for ages, in the East as well as in the West. He raised the question of 'Free Will and Predestination', 'Divine Will and Individual freedom' and the discussions that have been carried on without arriving at any definite conclusion. He showed him how in the parable of the Master we find a wonderful solution for this interminable controversy.

#### *The Way of Incarnations*

If we dive deep into the matter we are astonished to find such deep meanings in the simple daily acts or even the commonplace utterances of the Master. And this is true of one and all of the incarnations. This is clearly evident from a study of their lives. A few prophets like Sankara had to uphold the cause of Righteousness, refuting the false doctrines of their opponents. Leaving them aside, we find in the lives of other great teachers that they expressed and explained all they had to say in homely but touching parables, similes and metaphors. They seem to have scrupulously avoided high-sounding words and involved sentences in their conversations. But those plain words and familiar illustrations contained such profundity of thought and power to uplift the ordinary man to his highest ideal. It is not possible for us to exhaust

their meanings or plumb their depths. We realise in our heart of hearts the deeper significance of those simple words, the more we probe into them and rise above the mundane world towards the realisation of that Truth which the great seers experienced and expressed differently as the *summum bonum*, cosmic consciousness, salvation, or divine vision. Such ever has been the rule and we do not find any exception to it in the life and teachings of the Master. What all new thoughts we discover in his words now, appeared to be of no great value when we first heard them from his lips. It is enough if we but narrate a single incident by way of illustration.

#### *The Example of Girish*

Srijut Girish Chandra Ghose, after getting into touch with the Master for some time, one day came to him and whole-heartedly surrendered himself to him and asked him, "What should I do hereafter?"

Master: "Continue what you have been doing. For the present keep on to both—God and the world; and thereafter when one will fall off, things will take their natural course. But mind you, remember the Lord at least both morning and evening."

Saying this he turned towards Girish, as if for a reply. Hearing this, with a sad heart Girish began to think, "The nature of my work is such that I hardly find time to be regular even to attend to my

bodily needs. I shall certainly forget to remember God at these fixed hours. In that case I shall be put to a great difficulty. By breaking my promise to my Guru, I shall be courting much evil and incurring sin. It is so bad not to keep one's word even in one's dealings with ordinary men. How much more so in the case of him whom I have made the guide of my life ! Girish gave expression to those feelings and again thought, "But after all Sri Ramakrishna has not asked me to do anything very difficult. Others would have gladly welcomed this." But what else can he do ? Fully realising that his mind was extremely engrossed in the affairs of the world, he knew that it was impossible for him to devote even a little time for spiritual practices. And looking into his own nature he felt extremely restless at the very thought of being bound down for ever by vows and disciplines. His heart would know no peace unless he had actually broken them. All through his life he was of this frame of mind. To work of his own free will was no trouble to him. But his mind would revolt at the very thought of being dictated to by others. Conscious of his utter helplessness, with a heavy heart, he remained silent and so could not reply to the Master definitely either yes or no. How could he tell the Master, without being ashamed of himself, that he could not do such a simple thing, and what will others present there think of him ! Most probably they will not be able

to realise his utterly helpless condition and although they might not plainly speak out their minds, they would easily construe his answer as a pure affectation.

The Master thus finding him silent turned towards him and noting his innermost thoughts said, "If you cannot do that, remember the Lord once before meals and at bed-time."

### *Girish's Mental Unrest*

Girish still remained silent. Will that even be possible for him, he thought. He knew that there was no regular routine time for his meals. Sometimes he took food at ten in the morning; or on some other day at five in the evening. His meals at night were at equally irregular hours. Again, at times, worried by thoughts of litigation he had to pass days so distracted that when he sat for dinner he was hardly conscious of the fact. "I have not yet heard whether the fee sent to the Barrister has reached him or not. I do not know whether he will appear in time when the case comes up for hearing. If he absents, he will ruin my case."—such were the fears that possessed him during those hours. He thought, "In the course of events, if such occasions arise,—and it is not impossible—I shall certainly forget to remember the Lord !" Alas ! the Master has asked him to do such a simple thing and he is unable to give a positive answer. Girish was thrown into a great dilemma. He remained quiet and

silent, and in his heart there raged a tempest of anxiety, despair and fear.

### *Power-of-attorney*

The Master again looked towards Girish, laughed and said, "If you say 'even that I cannot do', give me your power-of-attorney." Sri Ramakrishna uttered this in a semi-exalted state.

These were just the words Girish wanted. His heart was soothed. The very idea of the infinite grace of the Master made his love and faith in him increase a thousandfold. He thought within himself, "Saved am I from rules and restrictions that are so frightening to me. Henceforward, whatever I may do, it is enough if I strongly believe that the Master will somehow or other save me by virtue of his divine power."

At that time Girish understood by the term 'giving the power-of-attorney' or handing over to the Master his entire charge, that he was not to renounce anything by his own self-effort or spiritual practice, for the Master will draw his mind away from things of the world by his own divine power.

### *A Bond of Love*

He did not realise then that in place of the bonds of rules and restrictions that were unbearable to him, he voluntarily accepted the bonds of love, a hundred times stronger than the former. He did not dive deep—as a matter of fact, he had not the power to see that

hereafter no way was open to him to complain or react against anything. He only had to accept patiently, without a murmur, whatever fell to his lot, success or misfortune, fame or disgrace, happiness or misery. All other thoughts were brushed aside and the one idea that dominated his mind was the infinite grace of Sri Ramakrishna, and through this relationship with the Master was developed in him, in extreme measure, the self-consciousness of a devotee. He thought, "Let worldly men say what they please, let them despise me if they like. He is mine at all times and under all circumstances, and what else does it matter? Who is there whom I must fear?" How could Girish realise then that in scriptures of devotion, this self-consciousness is considered as a form of Sadhana and that he who gets it is indeed a fortunate man? However, from now onwards Girish was freed from cares and worries. At all times, through every action of his, he cherished this one thought, "Sri Ramakrishna has taken entire charge of me." This made him constantly think of the Master, and contributed to bring about a thorough transformation in him, leaving a deep impress and influence on all his actions and thoughts. Although he could not grasp the inner significance of all this, he was happy, for he felt that the Master loved him and was to him dearer than the dearest.

## THE GROUND COVERED

**U**NCHANGING East is an expression that one frequently comes across when reading books on oriental countries written by western authors. The history of Asiatic countries during the past decades of the present century has, however, already contradicted the wisdom of this expression which is so dear to a type of western writers. Beginning with Japan, the Land of the Rising Sun, a wave of reform and progress has been passing over the East, and the sleeping nations of Asia have already roused themselves from the charm of medieval life into a consciousness of the new forces that are working within their modern environment. Manifestations of this new life impulse have appeared with tremendous power in countries like Turkey, Egypt, Persia, Afghanistan and China, and released a new set of forces that are destined to exercise a decided influence in shaping the future history of the world. In India, too, the working of this new life force is in ample evidence, although owing to the resistance it receives from the old social and political traditions of our land, it has not yet been able to produce the most spectacular changes which seem to be required to raise India in the estimation of the world. Nevertheless the modern spirit has already begun to work powerfully in the thoughtful sections of our land, while even the uneducated masses inhabiting the sequestered villages have not been left untouched by its stimulating influence.

The genesis of this new movement in our national life is undoubtedly our contact with the West in various fields of

life,—in government, trade and education, and the consequent study of our own institutions in a new light and from a new angle of vision. The first effect of this contact was rather adverse to the national ideals of India; for the early batches of India's English-educated sons were not able to keep their balance in the cross-currents of Western influence in which they were caught, and proceeded headlong with various schemes for the thorough westernisation of their country. Such schemes failed, as they are bound to fail, and gave place to a more sober and critical attitude towards the ideas coming from the West. In place of devising schemes to convert India into Europe, the leaders of thought in our land began to view our ideals and our history in the light of the social experiments conducted in the West for nearly a millennium—experiments whose value is specially enhanced by the fact that we have got a fuller and more consistent account of them than those of our own country in the past. As a result of such comparative study we have been able to understand the strength as well as the weakness of our social scheme and adopt only those aspects of Western culture which do not jar against the fundamental principles of our own culture. New India is the product of this commingling of certain aspects of Western thought with the best traditions of our own land.

If a medieval law-giver of India were to come back to life, he would surely be perplexed to note the striking changes that have come over our aspirations and our outlook on life. That

this would certainly be so is evident from the fact that even those old-fashioned Pandits, whose minds have been moulded exclusively by our classical literature, fail to reconcile themselves to the new social environment that confronts them today. While feeling proud of our country's past, we have at the same time become conscious of the deficiencies of our national culture and the need for rectifying the same if our country is to recover from the tragic circumstances in which she finds herself today. New India has therefore adopted certain schemes of reconstruction that bring her into bold contrast with the past and seem to promise for her a future that shall outshine any previous period of her long history.

The spirit of change in modern India is manifesting itself in three directions—in the new nationalism of our times, in the changed outlook on society and life in general, and in the Women's Movement. The spirit of nationalism that is in such conspicuous evidence in India's public life today is a matter of recent origin. When we study our history, whether as reconstructed by modern historians, or as embodied in our epics, we fail to find anything parallel to it therein. There certainly was a vague traditional conception of our country's unity under the name of Bharatavarsha. So too a hazy idea of cultural affinity between the Hindus on the one hand and the Muslims on the other, there undoubtedly was; but the feeling of oneness among the various provinces of our country, as in the limbs of a living organism, was practically absent. The invasion of one part of the country by foreign troops or the sufferings of the people in a particular area affected by floods, famines and epidemics, seldom reached the ears of the inhabitants of distant provinces, and even if such news reached at all, it did

not evoke an ardent and substantial sympathetic response which only the most intimate feeling of kinship can create. So too our masses, and most of the middle classes too, used to take no interest in the political and social well-being of the country as a whole, as these questions never came to their attention except when taxes went too high or occasional outbursts of tyranny outraged their conception of justice and fair play. The vastness of our land, the absence of the modern means of communication and the want of cheap literature may largely account for these features; but even taking them for granted, the absence of the national sentiment of the modern type cannot be denied. Even today the feeling has not reached its full growth, for if the people of different provinces have been brought nearer and the political consciousness of the masses has been awakened to some extent, the dividing factor of communalism still remains as an anti-national force barring India's path to full-fledged nationhood. But even amidst all such jarring factors the consciousness of an India, free in thought and government, with all the distant provinces united into one living self-conscious unit, has already become an irresistible force in the country, a force in the light of which alone the latest chapters of our political history can be explained.

This infant nationalism of India, however, seems to differ in some respects from its prototypes of the West. We often hear it stated that India is a spiritual land, and that even her nationalism is suffused with its spiritual aroma. It is somewhat difficult to understand how nationalism, any more than athletics, can be called spiritual in the true sense of the term, but if it is meant by this epithet that Indian nationalism has certain higher pur-

poses in view, the meaning becomes somewhat clear. Indian patriots do not encourage the jingo type of patriotism which declares 'My country, right or wrong', nor do they encourage the idea that patriotism means not only the love of one's country but the hatred of every other. Under the political situation in which India is at present placed it may be that a cloud of race-hatred overcasts India's political horizon, but if India remains true to her best and most thoughtful leaders, it is not likely that this feeling will gain any firm foothold, or extend its baneful influence into the future. It is a significant fact that in spite of all failures and disappointed hopes, political India considers the desire to walk in the path of Truth as the great motive-force behind the national awakening, and believes in love, purity, non-violence and readiness to suffer as the most effective solvent of her political problems. Equally unique is the tendency noticed in many quarters to deify the Motherland into a Goddess, an object of divine manifestation, and transform the love of country into devotion for Bharata Mata. The feeling that the cry "Vande Mataram" raises in an Indian's mind has in it more of the characteristics of religious fervour than of political passions. But there is also a danger to be guarded against—the danger of ethics passing into theology, of devotion changing into communal rancour. In India, more than in any other country, is the need for guarding against this transformation and to see that narrow religious enthusiasm as contrasted with spiritual idealism, is eliminated from our national temperament. That we have not succeeded in doing this is the cause of the ugly manifestations of communalism that often burst out in one part of the country or another.

The other vital movement that augurs well for India's future and marks a distinct era in her national life, is the awakening of Indian womanhood. It is a part of the general awakening of women all the world over, but in India it is of special significance in as far as it exercises a tremendous influence not only on the well-being of one half of the nation but also on the prosperity and self-respect of a whole country and of a great culture. The movement has not yet touched the rank and file of Indian women, but it has, however, become sufficiently deep-rooted in the country to produce a band of spirited women leaders who are qualified by culture and education to voice forth the needs of their as yet inarticulate sisters. Besides the external influence coming from the West, the movement seems to derive its motive-force from two deep-rooted feelings in the mind of India's cultured womanhood. In the first place, the modern Indian woman feels that while, as mother, she has been the virtual ruler of her children and has been raised by man to the position of a Goddess, as wife she has been subordinated and prevented from realising her womanly dignity. In the next place she feels bitterly that, as a result of this anomalous position, she has been led to specialise in dependence and helplessness until she has economically become a burden and socially a clog on national progress. This is more the feeling of woman herself than of man, as the speeches and resolutions at different women's conferences will show. And the modern Indian woman's voice of revolt seems to say unto man, with Tagore's Chitra, "I am Chitra. No Goddess to be worshipped, nor yet the object of common pity to be brushed aside like a moth with indifference. If you deign to keep me by your side in

the path of danger and daring, if you allow me to share the great duties of your life, then you will know my true self."

And what do the emancipated women of India demand? They do not say that they want to go back on Indian ideals; what they demand is only that social and individual freedom needed for the full growth of their personality. According to Mrs. Sarala Devi who presided at the Tamil Nad Conference last year, Indian women are anxious to stand by men, unimpaired in their family loyalties, unsullied in their far-famed chastity, which is the 'only jewel of womanhood'; all the freedom they ask of men is desired by them only to make themselves 'the best Indian women according to the highest spiritual standard'. When she views India's ideal of womanhood with the critical spirit imbibed from the West, she feels that they are 'the broadest, the humanest, the most healthful and sanitary, and the most spiritual ever conceived of in the history of mankind'; but she believes they have been marred and obscured by later-day outgrowths of social organisation, and she is determined to fight them out by the strength of agitation. According to her, "Our love of ornaments, the compulsory shrouding of women under the *Purdah*, child marriage, the denial of re-marriage for widows and our inferiority complex must go." The denial of freedom and consent in marriage, the denial of freedom of movement in the home and society, the denial of freedom in education and the denial of freedom of acquiring the means of livelihood are some of the evils that cloud the divine in womanhood and reduce them to the miserable position of animals in society. The fundamental rights she would demand on behalf of women are 'equal

rights of inheritance of father's property, equal rights in husband's property, right upon their body, right upon their mind, right upon their children, right to employment in all departments of public services, equal rights of citizenship, compulsory primary education for girls, facilities of adult education for women, complete adult franchise of women, and dignity of free labour.' These demands would mean that woman should be made the equal of man individually, politically and socially, and that this is in no way inconsistent with India's ideal of womanhood. The same illustrious lady believes that woman's true field is the home and that her mission is to carry the home-spirit into the world. "Life may lead us to rule kingdoms, to administer schools, to minister to the sick and the depressed, to fulfil any avocation of life. Let us carry the home-spirit wherever we go and into whatever we may do,—the affection of the mother, the sympathy of the sister, the illumination of the counsellor, and we shall be not only leaders of the home, but also the leaders of society."

One may regard that these demands and aspirations of Mrs. Sarala Devi correctly represent the spirit behind Women's Movement in India. But we would be wrong if we suppose that there is no poignant feeling of resentment against men in certain sections of emancipated womanhood. Srimati Sarala Devi Choudhurani's much commented speech in last year's Bengal Women's Conference is indicative of this spirit which, we must say, promotes the cause neither of woman nor of the country. She speaks much bitterly about the differential treatment of women at different stages of her life, of the antagonism between the feelings of man and of woman, of the usurpation on the part of man towards

woman, of his establishment of absolute rule over her, of utilising her services in picketing, without however recognising her merits and her patriotic services except by big pronouncements, of the Indian National Congress not taking up the women's problem as a part of its programme and a host of other grievances which women in India have against men. There is a good deal of truth in many of these complaints, but when they are viewed in relation to their historical background, Indian man may, perhaps, be exonerated to a large extent from these grievous charges that are laid against him. But the spirit underlying this speech cannot however be regarded as a healthy manifestation, in as far as it threatens to transplant into India that feeling of sex-antagonism which arose in the West in the wake of the Suffragette Movement. But it is re-assuring to note that Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the most gifted and perhaps the most widely known Indian woman of modern times, stands staunchly against this militant attitude of feminism. In her presidential address at the All India Women's Conference 1930 she said, "The demand for granting preferential treatment to woman is an admission on her part of her inferiority and there has been no need for such a thing in India as the women have always been by the side of men both in Councils and the fields of battle. We women recognise our responsibilities. Therefore it is that our rights are taken for granted. We have to educate the manhood that the spiritual reform of the world is woman's great work". This is indeed the correct attitude for Indian women to assume: for the social wrongs she has suffered in the past can be righted more easily and with little of unwholesome after-effects, if she would but assert her position as the teacher of man

in her capacity as mother—in which capacity woman has always received the highest honour in India—than by posing herself as a rival or a competitor of man in a bitter struggle for power and position in the world.

The other marked feature of New India is her changed outlook on society. This change is manifest in two directions—firstly in a critical evaluation of indigenous social conceptions, and secondly in a desire to secure a greater measure of social righteousness. The medieval Hindus believed that their social system known as the Varnashrama Dharma had originated from the faultless will of the Creator Himself and did not recognise the need for revising its principles in the light of social experiments carried on in other parts of the world although there are express statements to the contrary in the scriptures themselves. Social backwardness helped in their political subjection for century after century, but still it was not sufficient to shake their faith in the perfection of their social order. It was not until the modern economic system made the old kind of communal life impossible, and historical research revealed the evolutionary basis of society that Hindus came to question the soundness of prevailing social conceptions. The conceit of the old Varnashramite, vestiges of which are to be found in the present day Pandit mentality, has given way to a desire to study the social systems of other countries and, if need be, adopt from them what our system lacks. Today all thoughtful, educated Hindus, other than avowed reactionaries, believe that save in respect of some of its great spiritual ideals, the old social system requires a thorough overhauling, if the political aspirations of young India are to be fulfilled and the country should occupy a place in the vanguard of civilisation.

As a consequence of this spirit of self-criticism and the pressure of the modern economic and industrial system, society is passing from a state of staticity to one of dynamism. It is being increasingly felt if society has not degenerated from a previous state of divine perfection but has on the other hand evolved from crude beginnings, why men should not desire and work deliberately for the establishment of an order that satisfies the modern conceptions of social righteousness in a larger measure. Hence has risen the social reform movement which aims at greater social justice as well as greater social efficiency. As a result the accident of birth has ceased to be the all-important question with us, as it used to be in the eyes of our ancients, in determining a man's social respectability or his eligibility to spiritual and civic rights. That birth is to determine a man's profession in life is already becoming a matter of the past, although its power as a barrier against free social intercourse has not appreciably dwindled in spite of the challenge it frequently receives in one part of the country or other. According to the social conceptions of medieval India, a man of the higher caste possessed unjust social rights and immunities from the operation of common law, while those belonging to orders of lower standing were denied those opportunities of life which were their right as common men. The high caste man did not feel the unfairness of the position, nor the low caste man the injustice of it. Both considered it as it ought to be, and the one felt neither guilty nor the other aggrieved and defrauded. But New India has developed a new social conscience which does not tolerate the injustice of double standards in distributing the common rights of communal

life. The privileged, seized by a feeling of repentance for their past sins, are now in a mood not only to disclaim their unjust liberties, but to help the oppressed sections in their struggle to wrest away those human rights which were denied them in times gone by. The spiritual idealism of India, which hitherto used to find expression through the life of contemplation, has now allied itself with this urge for social amelioration. The power of Tapasya that the nation has acquired by a life of inwardness in the course of ages, seems to be now released into the social environment and directed to aid the altruistic spirit and the intellectual conceptions that the nation has inherited as a legacy from the present age. As a result of the commingling of the social and spiritual aspirations of the race, has been born New India's gospel of Practical Vedanta, which converts service into worship, and thereby (once again) bridges the gulf that separates the spiritual from the secular. It is this new idea sprung from a harmonious blending of the forces of nationalism, altruism and spiritualism that is filling modern India with the bubbling energy of new life, and is producing in this generation a crop of great men who may be the pride of the world in days to come.

It is often said that revolt is the sign of life and that discontent is the prelude to progress. If these truly be the measure of a nation's vitality, New India can very well stand the test. The generation that has gone used to be satisfied with the peace that followed the establishment of British power in the land. But New India feels that it is the creation of a wilderness that is miscalled peace, and believes that good Government is no compensation for the loss of liberty. The scope of its attention in political

and cultural matters has been growing beyond the confines of a province or a community until now it envisages the whole country, in however imperfect a way it might be. Its womanhood is beginning to feel that dependence and ignorance form too great a price for winning man's regard, even though she may be raised into the position of a Goddess. It has also found that the mistaking of social anachronisms for real spirituality is in express defiance of the spirit of the scriptures and that the application of science for giving better food and better health to the nation is not materialism. It has developed sufficiently the power of self-criticism in the light of which it seeks to assess the merits and defects of its institutions, and is showing readiness

to profit by the example of others in regard to matters in which it feels itself deficient. It has given up birth as a criterion of virtue and has realised the value of work directed towards securing a greater measure of social justice. Its idealism in these directions is propped up by its innate spiritual impulse which now seeks to find its fulfilment not only in silent contemplation, but also in works of active service. Quickened by the fructifying warmth of this new spiritual idealism, and nourished by the intellectual forces at work in its environment, New India which is yet a sapling shall surely grow into a mighty tree capable of giving protection to world's civilisation in times to come.

## ETHICS OF THE UPANISHADS

*By Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, M.A., Ph. D.*

### (1) *Social Ideas*

THE Upanishads do not ignore ethical and social problems. But greater stress has been laid upon the realisation of undecaying bliss. As dealing with the discipline of life, the Upanishads cannot overlook the regulation of conduct, the codes of duties in different stations of life, but these are of minor importance before the final end of the realisation of Truth. The Upanishads view life as a principle which is chastened through the performance of duties. And the intensive living of life exhibits its possibilities, sacredness and fragrance. But the main thesis of the Upanishads is to give a better understanding of life and hence they do not confine their outlook to the short satisfactions that follow the right adaptation in family or in society. Codes of duties and adjustment of rights

are neatly formulated in the Upanishads but they do not form the chief problem. The chief problem has been to find out the *summum bonum*, and in it all the minor ethical problems have been lost sight of. Life's search through its growth in different stages cannot lose sight of the final attainment and the final purpose; and the codes of duties have been formulated in such a way as can be helpful towards the realisation of the final goal. The Upanishads have built up a spiritualist communism through all forms of social institutions. Family and all other forms of social integrations are based upon the sense of unity which the fundamental truths of the Upanishads inspire. The sense of spiritual communism never fails in any phase of life. The teacher and the student, the wife and the husband, the father and the son, the

individuals and the community are all alike inspired by the sense of a holy communism, the spirit of akinness fostered by untarnished vision of Truth. The sense of the pervading unity of life and Truth has inspired the whole being and helped its adaptation in a way which can reveal its truth in every turn of life. Harmony is the dominant note in family and society, as it is the dominant note in the aspirant after cosmic life. The divisions and differences are resolved into this dominant note of life. The contraries of claims and rights cannot produce discord in the ever elastic life. And life retains its plasticity and adaptability when it is not cut off from the All-embracing Truth.

The sense of harmony has made the flow of life through society and family easy and spontaneous, and the individualistic sense has its natural death. The Upanishads never recognise individualism of any form; the individualistic sense is to be sacrificed before the beauty and the sacredness of life manifesting itself through grades and hierarchies of existence.

Individualism has been displaced by social harmony, and this harmony is the shadow and the reflection of the cosmic harmony. Life is one and undivided in inorganic and organic existences, and the more its unity is understood, the more we are relaxed from the inelasticity of individualism and begin to feel the joy of the infinite plasticity of life. The natural barriers that create tribe and group-consciousness then disappear and the sense of humanity as a cosmic society dawns upon us.

The Upanishads draw the picture of a cosmic society in which all types of men, extroverts and introverts, live in mutual sympathy and helpfulness, for their life is inspired by the intuition of identical Being that runs through all.

Strife and conflict can never disappear from society unless the harmony of its universal pulse is felt. The Upanishads think low indeed of the man or the sect which prefers to live in isolation.

The social organism is perpetually drawing the sap of its existence from the spring of life, and the more the life becomes cosmo-centric, the more it lives fully. Life cannot flourish if it is cut off from the source. The insistence upon individualism has this baneful effect. It dries up life. It kills its elasticity. It makes it a stagnant pool.

The seers of the Upanishads feel the naturalness of society as an institution, and the mutual dependence of its component parts. The teachers and the parents have the privileged position, because the sense of harmony and of cosmic life is more active in them and inspires selflessness and sacrifice. They serve better, because they know better. Knowledge shapes conduct, and their finer knowledge makes their conduct more graceful, their movements more beautiful.

The reverence which is shown to the elders is spontaneous in its origin and unrestricted in its expression. Their cosmo-centric life excites admiration, commands obedience. Selflessness makes them the fountain of love and sympathy. They become attractive forces by the deeper harmony and the wider rhythm of their life. A sense of superiority is ascribed to them, because of the rich outflow of life and the wide radiation of light from them.

In family and in society life is not dominated by the spirit of careless disregard of the sense of the whole. The individual freedom has got its check, but it gets a better and truer expression through the communistic spirit. The individual lives the life of the whole. The more he is

inspired this way, the more he begins to live the cosmic life with its wider sympathies. He enjoys the dignity of life in a better sense through the spirit of the whole. And, therefore, others feel a natural attraction for him as the better and the wider life is enjoyed in his company. In this way the head of the family and the society used to get a superior status and recognition.

But this superiority does not produce the sense of isolation and aloofness. The sense of self-assertiveness which springs up from an exaggerated self-consciousness can have no place in a form of society which is based upon the spirit of voluntary sacrifice inspired by the sense of identity. Where the being is influenced by the deeper perception and life of Truth, the sense of aloofness can never make its headway. The sense of the cosmic and the whole kills the stiffness of our being and makes it responsive to the play of life in the small and the great. Such a delicate soul cannot claim isolation, far less demand separateness. The better life and the subtler vision beget finer sympathies, and it is, therefore, natural that where life has its finest expression, attraction thereto will be the greatest. The wise men are the salt of the universe, they attract by the dignity of their life and the harmony of their being. Because they perceive more, they serve more, they do more. A tendency naturally develops in society to establish a race of men that becomes the torch-bearers of Truth and the standard-bearers of service. Such men are the natural guardians of humanity.

The principle of reciprocity and harmony determines the relations between the different social types and between the different stages of life. The householder and the wanderer represent apparently two contrary ideals in social life. The one follows *vita activa*, the

other *vita negativa*. The one represents the positive pole, the other the negative pole, as it were, in social life, but the apparent conflict is resolved because life in society is not deflected from the law of harmony and equilibrium. The wanderer helps the householder with his wisdom and vision, the householder serves him with bare necessities of life. In a healthy organism it is not possible for the units to follow the same path, but all the units are influenced by the spirit of charity and mutual service which keeps up the healthy tone of social life. The law of harmony counterbalances the evil effect of the extreme one-sidedness of the composite members of the society. The householder and the wanderer thus used to help each other. Light can never be separated from life. Light gets extinguished without life. Life does not shine without light.

The Upanishads bear evidence to the existence of different social types, the Brahman, the Kshatriya and the Vaisya representing the intellectual class, the warrior class and the trading class. But in the fluid life of society, these types do not live in exclusiveness. They feel the unity of life, social and cosmic. They live in concord. If there are types, they rise out of the necessities to meet the different demands in social life. The exclusiveness is, therefore, more apparent than real and cannot exist where the flow of life is free and easy. But even in the free adaptation in life some selective process becomes a necessity, otherwise the social values and social purposes cannot be realised and achieved. The different classes in society have different creative ideals and conservative values, for in the economy of life the one singular type cannot exhaust the creative ideals and values of the race. Distinctive types must grow in specialisation to serve the social life in its infinite expressions.

A well regulated society must have different types of individuals.

But the process of specialisation in society is not and cannot be absolute and there can be no permanence of social types in the fluidity of life. Community of interests in thinking and adaptation has every tendency to create a fellowship which eventually passes into marked social types. Thinking produces different casts of mind, and life naturally has its varied expressions through these casts. But this does not plead for the eternally fixed types in society. And the special interests and thinking cannot divide humanity into classes, for the unifying links are greater than the separating demands. The social life naturally finds outlets through diverse channels, but the same juice of life fills all. Necessities separate them, but life unites them.

And even if there had been social types, meeting the different kinds of social needs, the division in the Upanishadic times was not hard and fast. The members of the intellectual class used to approach the members of the warrior class for initiation into spiritual truths and esoteric wisdom (Vide Kaushitaki Upanishad). There was no stiffness in the adaptation of life. Everything was free, everything was easy in the harmonious adjustment of claims and rights. No one would encroach upon the sacred rights of others, as habits, duties, customs and codes were different in the different types—but these adaptations would not have a blinding and inelastic effect upon the soul. And there would have been free interchange and intercourse of wider ideas in which everybody seems to have been interested. And for this the consideration of superiority or inferiority of types would not at all arise. In fact, the ancients seemed to have

shown a better appreciation and kinder understanding of the social life in this that they were alive to the sense of universal *ethos* and would value the free life of this *ethos* which inspires the life of the whole. The sense of superiority or inferiority with regard to types cannot arise, for the specialisation of function cannot blind us to the deeper intuitions of the soul and the finer rhythm of the mind. Humanity has some priceless possessions in command—art, literature, poetry, philosophy—and however preoccupied life may be to meet the special demands of the situations, life has its promise of music and harmony and intuition for all. Life distributes its blessings of wisdom and immortality evenly, and every one can get them if they are only anxious to receive them. They are the priceless treasures of humanity and in them humanity is ever united, and in them humanity realises its integrity.

These are questions that affect the minor moral problems in life. But the main problem is the *summum bonum* in life. About the problem of *summum bonum* the Upanishads embody a conception, not of progress or perfection but of liberation, based as it is upon a unique conception of Being.

In the Upanishads Truth is a greater concept than value, and the value as satisfying personal needs has been lost sight of in Truth as the essence of Being.

## (2) Moral Ideas

The Upanishads emphasise Truth more than value. The ethics in the sense of seeking perfection or realising a pleasing state of consciousness or all-embracing happiness of the totality cannot find a place in the Upanishads. Delight has been sought, but it is no delight in the psychological or ethical sense.

The value-concept is always associated with personality, and since the Upanishads are not keen about it, the ethics of personality cannot find its full expression in the Upanishads. Ethics in the sense of a will-culture has a place in it, in the sense that before long the will is to be sacrificed for a will-less bliss.

And naturally so, for the Upanishads do not set much value upon personality, their main end has been to go beyond the claims of personal self to find Eternal Truth. Truth and value have not been reconciled. Truth is the summit of existence, value belongs to the life of concentration. The only value that counts is the value of Truth, and therefore Truth must be reached by all means.

Moral life has its limitation. It implies a division and an opposition in our nature. To set up a duality in our nature is to invite a constant conflict and is to ignore the completeness of Truth. It has been almost a commonplace in ethics that morality lies in the spiritualisation of nature's forces, so that ultimately the dualities and the contrarieties of moral life may be finally resolved. Moral discord is replaced by spiritual concord. The conflict between nature and spirit is finally dissolved. And this harmony between the two, or the mastery of spirit over nature is hailed as the cheerful and happy promise of life. This is supposed to be the greatest message that life teaches. This gives the greatest satisfaction as it does justice to the composite parts of our being. The spirit conquers its conqueror, nature. But it is not strictly a conquest, the spirit finds in nature, not its rival or antagonist but its helpmate in its expression on the physical and biological planes. And hence the greatest value is attached to the concord between nature and spirit.

Value can be, therefore, strictly set up in this effort of self-expression of spirit through nature, because there is a harmonisation after a confusion, an attainment after a struggle. Value has indeed a meaning that way. To that which is complete in itself and full in itself cannot be attributed this kind of value. Creation of beauty and holiness implies an effort, and effort implies opposition, contraries, conflict, tension in being. However attractive this ideal of moralisation of our nature appears, it will be a ceaseless effort, for the complete moralisation will invite its own death and end. Moralisation cannot be complete; it is an unceasing process which always is to be. Morality has no meaning apart from this conflict, and whatever harmony it may reach, nature cannot completely cease to act and create confusion, for this means the cessation of the active spirit to shape nature according to its own ends. Hence morality is essentially a value that has its root, growth and development so long as the duality of nature and spirit exists. Pure spirit has no morality so to speak. It is a-moral, since it is complete.

The Upanishads, therefore, do not emphasise the value concept, for value is sought by the self when it becomes creative, but it has no meaning for itself in its completeness. Truth is completeness. It does not find anything true besides itself. It is self-contained. Hence it does not stir to creative ends or purposes. The true ideal is the ideal of completeness. And Truth is to be realised by denying or transcending the relativities of life and by forsaking their consequence, however attractive and glorious.

The ideal of liberation is to get above the creative nature of our being and to understand its completeness in itself. The creative urge is the index of limi-

tation. And liberation is to get above all sorts of limitations, not by magnifying our will and cultivating all-embracing love, but by realising that spirit is essentially transcendent. Liberation represents the seeking of the transcendence of life. This transcendence gives us the sense of its completeness. It impresses us with its fullness and teaches us to look upon the urges of expression as limitations and partialities, and not as Truth. Liberation is then a freedom from the partialities and relativities of life. They are denied in order that the fullness and the transcendence can be lived. It is not then the denial of Truth and life though it is the complete denial of the partialities. Liberation is not then death, it is life in its fullness free from illusions and falsities.

The goal of life is not the realisation of values but the attainment of Truth.

Value attracts, Truth endures. Truth is the summit of Being, and therefore the true value can live in Truth. Partialities do not satisfy life, however delightful they may be, however chastened and fine their urges may be. And completeness denies moralisation and ethics.

This ideal of Truth in the Upanishads—an ideal which is quite impersonal in its nature—has led some to think that the Upanishads have really no ethics. The very basis of ethical life is personality, but the Upanishads in denying the truth of personality have really disestablished the very foundation of ethics. This charge would be true if personality has a place in complete Truth, and if the moral person be real in absolute sense. The Absolute is unique. It transcends personality.

*(To be continued)*

## SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA, SANNYASIN AND TEACHER

*By Sister Devamata*

THE real portrayal of Swami Ramakrishnananda was given in my book, "Days in an Indian Monastery" and in my subsequent volume, "Sri Ramakrishna and His Disciples", but these portraits were drawn with long brush-strokes, eliminating all that had not universal appeal for West and East alike. As the perspective lengthens, however, and the living figure grows dim, each discarded detail gains new value and demands recording. This is the reason for these belated memories. They are offered as gleanings from the field, gathered up after the main harvest has been garnered.

My close association with Swami Ramakrishnananda counts among my most precious Indian memories. Apart from our official relation as superior and member of the rank and file in the Religious Order to which we both belonged, the warmest friendship existed between us—a friendship mellowed on my side by profound reverence and on his side by a mother-solicitude for my well-being. He shared the riches of his thought and living with me unstintingly and he gave me a most generous confidence. When a turn of circumstance forced me to open a letter bearing his name and I explained the incident to him, his reply was: "You

are free to open all my letters. I have no secrets from you."

No words define more aptly Swami Ramakrishnananda than those of Lord Gouranga, "Lower than a blade of grass, with endurance like a tree, seeking not honour, but giving honour to all." He possessed an uplifted quality in his bearing, a mightiness of stride, which by the unknowing could be interpreted as haughtiness; but in reality he was the humblest of men. Humility was fundamental with him. It was more than mere absence of pride. It sprang from complete self-forgetting. There was no place in his consciousness for anything but his Master. What St. Paul declared in his Epistle to the Galatians—"Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"—described perfectly Swami Ramakrishnananda's attitude toward himself and toward that one whom he called Guru. He was dead wholly to himself and alive only in Sri Ramakrishna.

His coming and going, his eating and sleeping, his labour and his teaching, his entire living, took their rise in the will of the Master, never in his own desire or convenience. Those who saw him carry his Master's picture—pressed close to his heart, his body bent over it in protection, as he walked through the rain from the carriage to the entrance of the new Math at Mylapore, when he moved the Shrine there from the Ice House, could appreciate the tenderness of love, the power of devotion for his Guru, which transfused his being. He could say of his Master as truly as did St. Paul of his, "The life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith in the Son of God."

His feeling was shown in these words spoken to me one day: "If we are caught in a labyrinth and some one comes and says, 'I can show you the way out,' what should we do? Follow

him. And the gratitude we feel is what we call worship and devotion. This person is the Guru and we should follow him implicitly, if we want to escape from the labyrinth. Sometimes, however, we think: 'Why should I follow him? Let me find my own way.' So we go off by ourselves. But he is always so patient and loving that he waits until we grow weary trying to find the way alone and come back to him."

"The work of the Guru is done in a very few minutes," he said again as we sat together one evening in the Math at Mylapore. "By a few simple words the Guru gives a new turn to the life—just as when a man is riding a bicycle, some one sees that the road he is taking will lead to danger, so he turns him round and starts him in another direction. The man keeps on pedalling as before and the bicycle keeps on moving, but now the man is moving away from danger instead of toward it. Similarly the Guru sees that the direction you have taken is dangerous, so he turns you round. All your activities may go on as before, you may keep on pedalling just the same, but now you are riding in a safe direction. The Guru's work is to give the turn in the right direction."

Swami Ramakrishnananda was too essentially a disciple in spirit to take the position of Guru. He had many devoted followers, but he never spoke of them or thought of them as disciples. Nor was he willing to assume the direction of a life. He gave encouragement, hope, ready forgiveness for failures and mistakes, but he believed it was good for a man to solve his own problems and make his own decisions. He set a very high standard for those about him. He expected them to face situations like men,—no whining or complaining, no striking

back when rebuked, no idleness, no weakness and no giving up the fight. "Man is a hero so long as he struggles," were his own words.

Above all, the Swami gave no quarter to egotism or selfishness. To him spirituality meant self-abandonment. Those who were leading the spiritual life must make no compromises with the ego. "When man asserts himself in man, he commits all sorts of atrocities," he once declared to me. "When God asserts Himself in a man, then the man is good, pure and virtuous. It is true that every soul, so long as it is in a body, has a little bit of ego. If there were no ego there would be no soul; for take away the ego and what remains? Only God."

"A Sannyasin can never afford to be selfish. He should be as willing to help his worst enemy as he is to serve his best friend. It is for this we have become Sannyasins—to bring help to every living being without regard to what he does or does not do to us."

One evening several visitors were gathered with the Swami in the hall of the old Mylapore Math. I too happened to be present. Some one spoke of a certain Sannyasin who had exceptional strength and vigor, but spent little of it in service to others. Swami Ramakrishnananda remarked with a note of scorn in his tone: "It is easy for the selfish man to be strong and healthy. Perhaps it is raining, and some one comes to say such and such a man is ill with fever. The selfish man says: 'It would not be prudent for me to go out in the rain. I might fall ill myself. Tell him I am sorry, but I cannot come. When it stops raining, I may come!' The unselfish man tucks his cloth up, wraps a Chuddar around his shoulders, and hurries out through the rain to the sick man, not stopping to calculate risk or discomfort. Swami Vivekananda, if

he heard that a friend was suffering from fever, would rush out and go to him even in the worst storm. He was willing to give his life to save the life of another. A selfish man will not venture out in stormy weather even if his own wife is ill. He says: 'If she dies, I can always marry again; but if I die, who will marry?' Such a man is sure to enjoy good health."

"So long as we are selfish our work must be fruitless. We may deliver fine lectures, we may gain name and fame, but the actual results will be nil. The moment, however, our little self disappears, at that moment our real work begins. Then we may live an obscure life and go nowhere, but we shall accomplish wonders."

"When we drop the ego from our consciousness and live in God, we have unlimited power. God is the only existence that is real, all other existences are unrealities behind which God exists as the reality. This *Maya* is so irresistible and it is this *Maya* which makes us selfish. Only when God is gracious to us can we lift the veil and get a glimpse of Him. Then all selfishness drops off."

"The word 'selfishness' is not always understood. When by 'self' I understand the body or the little self and I do something for that self, I am selfish. But there is a Self which is beyond this physical body; when I do something for that Self, that is worshipping God. The man who lives in that higher Self is never selfish. Try to feel God inside yourself and you will overcome all selfishness. When you live constantly in the presence of Divinity, the ego loses its power; but so long as the ego rules a man, he is a bond-slave. All your anxieties and worries come from egotism and selfishness. Let go your little self and they will all disappear."

To find favour in Swami Ramakrishnananda's eyes one had to be genuine. The Swami showed little patience with the Pharisaical type of spirituality that "fasts to be seen of men." For a time there was a boy at the Mylapore Math whom I liked very much. He had a pleasant disposition and a friendly manner. Swami Ramakrishnananda was kind to him and seldom rebuked him, but accepted very little service from him. I wondered at it. Only later did I understand. One early morning the boy left the Math and did not return. He was tired of work and wished to meditate. Swami Rama-

krishnananda smiled and said: "He will not go far in the religious life. He is not sincere. When he claimed to be fasting, he would slip off by himself and eat something; and when after his bath he would sit in meditation, he would lie down on his mat and sleep. He thought I did not know. That way you cannot get anywhere. You must be genuine if you would advance in the spiritual life. You may cheat a man for a time, but you cannot cheat God. Nor can you deceive the world for long. Your face, your tone, your manner will betray you."

## WAS THERE A UNITARY KARMA DOCTRINE?

*By H. D. Bhattacharyya, Darsanasagara, M.A., B.L., (P.R.S.)*

**T**he word Karma carries to western minds a definite significance, namely, that all moral action produces a quantity of merit or demerit which must be worked off by enjoyment or suffering in another existence according to a rigorous law of equivalence. This law operates, it is thought, without reference to divine grace or messianic absolution and thus throws man entirely upon his own moral resources without the least hope of getting assistance from any quarter. The prospect of removing all faults by personal endeavour is so remote that, not unnaturally, a man becomes pessimistic about his future; and as there does not seem to be any early chance of putting an end to the rounds of rebirth in which he finds himself involved, he becomes careless about the way in which he lives and does not possess that strong faith in God which characterises the West, in as much as God is not of much assistance to him in winning his redemption.

The word Karma as understood in the East, however, imports many things more. It means a definite attitude towards earthly existence which is considered to be evil and therefore not worth clinging to. It means a strenuous life of self-discipline without any expectation of outside help or the prospect of an easy salvation. It means linking up the whole of animate creation by a tie of moral destiny and a compassionate regard for the sufferings of every kind of life. It implies an initial handicap, no doubt, but does not connote that the possibility of voluntary improvement of character and destiny is altogether absent from any grade of existence—the implication being rather that in the case of man, within an ambit determined by fate, the fullest opportunity is provided for improving one's status by kindly service, fervent devotion and spiritual insight. Human life is regarded as a privilege and an opportunity, and responsibility increases in proportion to spirituality attained.

But life in India as elsewhere refuses to be limited within the bounds of pure logic, and man, in spite of his rationality, still carries within him elements that clamour for affective, and not intellectual, satisfaction. And so, while the philosophers have generally shown an uncompromising attitude towards the moral problem and have been obliged to defend not only the transitoriness of heaven but also the transitoriness of the gods themselves, the people at large have guided their lives by two slightly contradictory attitudes towards religious practices. They have fancied either that *mantras* have an efficacy of their own and can coerce the gods into charity or the fates into kindness, or that Gods are charitable by disposition and can be appeased easily and moved to take pity and grant boons and blessings. The religious attitude, if we may call this as contra-distinguished from the philosophical attitude mentioned above, has retained eternal heaven as the destiny of the good soul and, while not ignoring altogether the necessity of spiritual knowledge, laid more emphasis upon devotion and practice than upon self-knowledge.

But that it should be impossible to benefit a soul spiritually if it has not itself, either by knowledge or by devotion, deserved a kindly fate—has been regarded as an unsatisfactory solution of the moral problem in less enlightened quarters. It has been held accordingly that it is not the personal element but the character of the deed that counts and that therefore good cancels bad irrespective of the identity of the agents. Thus it is possible to confer spiritual benefit upon others by acts expressly designed to improve their status in after-life whether they do or do not (generally they do) benefit the agent himself spiritually. A work of public charity, a gift to a religious

order, a periodical *Śraddha* may all, if done in the spiritual interest of a relative, bear good fruit, and a virtuous consort or a dutiful king may confer benefits not won by personal endeavour. On the other hand, parents may infect their progeny by their moral lapses and unsatisfied guests may leave the burden of their sins on inhospitable hosts, and kings may bring disasters to their subjects by neglecting their kingly duties.

These contradictory beliefs raise the suspicion that the doctrine of Karma was never unitary at any time and that in different circumstances and at different times elements borrowed from diverse sources failed to harmonise themselves and were differently emphasised to suit topical needs. Out of a chaos of doctrines on the subject there emerge three well defined attitudes towards Karma and its negation in Indian thought. Each element can claim an equally hoary antiquity with the other two, and it is difficult to suggest that any one arose as a modification of any other aspect of the doctrine.

The presence of the doctrine in the Vedas has been questioned in the West and it has been suggested that the joyful life of the Vedic Aryans was due to the absence of this belief. Its presence in a rudimentary form is now being acknowledged as when Griswold points out that the prayer to be joined with *Ishtapurta* may be an anticipation of the doctrine. Similarly, the souls of men going into plants and the story of Vamadeva who from his mother's womb refers to his previous life may be more than poetic outbursts, and the deification of men and the sending of the enemies to a dark region may have sufficed to start a workable theory of post-mortem existence. The prayer for progeny and prosperity was based cer-

tainly on a belief in its efficacy and in the power of the gods to requite religious service. Taking all the elements together, we find an anticipation of all the later forms of the theory in the Veda itself, namely (1) *Ishtapurta*, and also the reign of *Rta* throughout the universe, supplying the self-sufficiency of a moral law demanding nothing more than an equivalence of moral deed, (2) the gifts of the gods to prayerful men providing the starting point of the theistic attitude of later times, and (3) the two paths for gods and fathers and the deification of men initiating the cult of the *manes*. The magic rites of the *Atharva Veda* provided also a basis for superstitious veneration of unmeaning practices, curious fetishes and popular cults to control the future here below.

The subsequent fate of the doctrine is inextricably linked up with the development of the later religious literature in orthodox and heterodox schools; for we find that the incipient thoughts on the subject to be found in the Vedas were elaborated in different fashions in the different schools of thought and practice, and were accentuated to such an extent that they looked like warring creeds. The *Brahmanas* took up the sacrificial cult in right earnest and, while retaining a show of religious attitude, raised the importance of *mantras* to such a pitch that the gods were reduced to mere dispensers of moral rewards without much personal initiative of their own. It is this tradition that the *Mimamsa* school inherited, and even popular belief was infected with the thought that the gods were jealous and, for fear of losing their jobs, would take recourse to any means, fair or foul, to prevent a successful performance of any sacrifice. The gods had themselves gained their present status by their austerities, and

so they take particular care to delude the demons and tempt aspiring sages by their wiles, inasmuch as it is not in their power to refuse a prayer, even to their own undoing, when properly approached. Sacrificial action produces an *Apurva* which acts as *Adrsta* according to the *Mimamsa* school. God's function in the joining of fruition to deed is very limited indeed—all that He can do is to invest Karma with a proper reward but strictly in accordance with a scheduled formula. Even when in later times it was acknowledged that Karma was inactive and could not get an appropriate embodiment without divine propulsion into matter, that God could out of His infinite mercy stop for some time the ceaseless rounds of rebirth by introducing a *pralaya* and that He could re-start the cosmic process as prompted by His own desire, it was never contended that He could thereby alter the destinies of souls or withhold for all times the operation of the law of moral action. The destiny of a man is in his own hands, and if he wishes to gain a blissful status, he must work accordingly without any reliance upon divine help or divine co-operation. In the *Brahmanas* and the sacrificial literature in general the concept of heaven was retained, but this eternal heaven is not the gift of the gods but a conquest of man—it is *Karmajita* (acquired by meritorious or sacrificial deeds).

It is no wonder therefore that, when the *Upanishads*, *Buddhism* and *Jainism* slightly altered the character of the means of attaining good status and also of the ultimate destination of the soul, they were not hampered very much by a hostile theistic tradition. The gods had already been subdued and all that was necessary was to ignore them altogether. Besides, the gods had not been held up as models of

virtue in the sacrificial literature and it was doubtful whether it was any use approaching such gods for spiritual benefit or any good going to their heaven. The sage was accordingly advised to adopt a different method of winning his salvation. He must fathom the mysteries of existence by thought and not offer oblations to the gods. Meditation, as initiated by the Aranyakas, had already emphasised the subjective contributions to spiritual benefit as against the objective practices of the Brahmanas, and this tradition of illumination was taken up by orthodoxy and heterodoxy alike and made the basis of a new philosophy of life, according to which the cognitive aspect of the soul was the only means of attaining a proper hereafter, and personal endeavour the self-sufficing condition of winning salvation. The effect was disastrous so far as the gods were concerned. Jainism began the doctrine that gods have to be embodied again as men to save themselves by taking refuge in the faith of the Jina and that even if there be tiers of heavens, the land where the Siddhas go is located at the top of the cosmos, far above the heavens where the gods of different grades dwell. Jainism did not indeed break away completely from the concept of heaven or the concept of bliss as the final objective of all moral endeavour, but it definitely crippled the gods and insisted on spiritual illumination and faith in an enlightened human personality as the *conditio sine qua non* of getting release from transmigration.

The Upanishads also in their own way crippled the gods. The gradual emphasis placed upon a formless Brahman as the locus of all thought in the place of the concrete Vedic gods (who carried on a shadowy existence and had

to come to sages occasionally for illumination) rendered the concept of a concrete heaven futile; and even when it was retained, it was regarded as equally temporary with its denizens and was at best a temporary haven of rest for the good from which a return with the efflux of time was inevitable. But, equally with the gods and their heavens, finite spirits lost all absolute reality and they were now regarded as temporary manifestations of the Absolute, destined ultimately to merge in the Absolute Brahman with the rise of true knowledge. When the reality of the agent was doubtful it was no good emphasising the work of action—the knowledge of one's identity with the Absolute was the only way to save oneself by losing oneself in the Absolute Self. Thus, although the Upanishads began the enquiry into the mysterious character of Karma, as in the Yajnavalkya-Artabhadra dialogue, and hinted that good begets good and bad bad, the ultimate position that they reached was that Karma was not the final goal of spiritual life inasmuch as it was only a principle of individuation which the finite spirit would be well advised to abandon. Naturally, therefore, the new concept of salvation took very little notice of the joys of a material heaven and laid emphasis upon the subjective character of ultimate blessedness.

Buddhism went further than the Upanishads in some respects. It accepted with Jainism the position that knowledge was more worthy than work and that illumination was more efficacious than sacrifice. It agreed also that human effort in this direction was adequate for attaining salvation. But it did not accept the Jain view of the land of the blessed, as crudely conceived by the latter, nor any conception of hereafter that might act as a decoy to

strenuous self-discipline. It abandoned at the same time the formless Brahman of the Upanishads, and while accepting the position that permanent identity of the finite spirit was an illusion, went further in this direction and reduced the whole of being to a flow and flux in the midst of which the only abiding factor was the inviolate character of the law of moral justice. Karma now became de-personalised, as it were, and came to be conceived as a transferable sum of energy that could pass from one being to another and did not need personal requital to be considered valid.

If we take all the three forms together now, we find that while Jainism remained more or less on a primitive level regarding the conceptions of heaven and Karma (which was regarded as having form), the Upanishads transcended the individuals and the gods alike to find an ultimate satisfaction, while Buddhism not only denied the gods and the hereafter but at the same time did not even feel the necessity, as the Upanishads did, of retaining the phenomenal identity of the finite self. The protest against the sacrificial cult was almost equally strong in these systems of thought, although for historical reasons the Upanishads were obliged to bestow some faint-hearted praise on the worth of Karma here and

there. The possibility of obtaining illumination without the help of the gods was equally upheld by all, and although, again for historical reason, Jainism and Buddhism made far more of the contributions of succeeding prophets of the creed, the Upanishads were not averse from acknowledging the dignity of finite spirits in matters spiritual. But what is more important for our purpose is to consider how within such a short time not only should the doctrine of Karma be formulated but formulated with differential emphasis in the different systems of thought. It would be difficult to establish that one arose out of another by way of supplementation or protest; it is far more cogent to assume that a floating mass of popular beliefs was worked up philosophically in consonance with their particular religious creeds by the three different systems of thought. Probably there was some protest against the sacrificial cult and its theory of the attainment of heaven by rituals properly performed; against the system of sacrifices that involved the taking of life; against the system of proxy in elaborate sacrifices. But even then the protests were so differently formulated that a multiple beginning of systematisation would not be an improbable supposition.

*(To be continued)*

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## CAN THERE BE A UNIVERSAL RELIGION ? \*

*By Swami Ghanananda*

**M**ANY earnest and sincere men often talk of establishing a universal religion and a universal brotherhood. They believe that it is possible for us to evolve a system of religious thought which would be acceptable to all mankind as the highest form of non-sectarian religion. They also believe that such a universal religion, as they have in view to establish on earth, will be beyond all creeds and sects, dogmas and doctrines. In fact, instances are not wanting of men and women banding themselves together into large organisations with the deliberate idea of establishing a universal religion which will be followed by all persons on earth, and a universal brotherhood of which all persons will be members. The organisers of such institutions work with great speed and enthusiasm for the purpose of establishing their centres in various countries of the world and various provinces of every country.

But is it possible to establish a universal religion or a universal brotherhood? If it were so, what will be the elements of that universal religion and what will be the fundamental principles of that universal brotherhood?

When one thinks deeply about the problem, one cannot help thinking it out on the analogy of a universal language, a universal literature, a universal art, a universal poetry, a universal culture, a universal science. If it would be possible for us to create a universal language or literature, art or poetry, culture or science, then, we may be reasonably led to think that it would

be possible for us also to establish a universal religion or a universal brotherhood.

Let us examine for a while the fabric of some of the religions of the world and see for ourselves how and whence their different warp and woof have come. Taking different religions into consideration, we find that they exhibit a rich variety and a manifold diversity which seem to baffle all attempts at establishing a universal religion.

Taking for example the wonderful religion of Hinduism, we find that it has been able to combine within itself almost all the various elements of any religion that would appeal to the head or the heart of man. Certain portions of the vast body of Hindu religious literature, like those dealing with Yoga or the psychological path of the realisation of the Atman, reveal a remarkable psychological wisdom, and are based upon profound psychological principles which were arrived at through experimentation and research in the past. Patanjali, that great Yogi who has not only codified the truths of Yoga of his time in the form of Yoga Sutras but also verified the truths as were known to him and as were handed down to him by his predecessors, reveals the most profound psychological wisdom and has given to the world a good and unchallengeable system of Yoga. Its soundness and precision have been so great that it has left an indelible impress upon the different systems of moral and spiritual disciplines or Sadhanas that obtain in Hinduism. It was not only in the

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\* Notes of one of a series of talks broadcast from Colombo.

psychological realm that the ancient Hindus soared high, but also in the realm of pure intellectual thought. By the process of introspective self-analysis and almost merciless and unrelenting process of ratiocination, the ancient Jnanis or thinkers arrived at the conviction that man cannot be the body nor even the mind, but that he is the permanent entity or principle behind varying states of consciousness or existence, behind varying modes of thought and strata of consciousness. Even in the field of emotion the ancient seers of Hinduism made brilliant achievements. The Bhakti Yogins of India have built up a regular science of the emotions. These saints discovered the path of Divine Love and realised Divine Love as the essence of all love. There were, however, some temperaments that were drawn to the path of action, and even before the days of Sri Krishna who has put in a nutshell in the Bhagavad Gita all the truths relating to this path of Karma Yoga, there arose great thinkers who devised ways and means by which the secret of right activity could be understood and life's actions and endeavours be so done and regulated as to emancipate man from the thralldom of Samsara.

All such soundness, precision and system in the psychological, rational, emotional and active paths of spiritual disciplines can be seen well displayed in the higher scriptures of the Hindus like the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, and the Vedanta Sutras as well as the various systems of philosophical thought which India has produced ; but all these higher scriptures were not easily understood by the people. The masses required the presentation of religion in a simple and popular form, and therefore, the great seers of Hinduism thought it their duty to democratise the treasures of spiritual thought enshrined in the

higher scriptures, by expressing them in the form of Puranas or sacred mythology and legend. Just as philosophy is for the intellectual man, myth is for the less learned. Just as the science of action or the path of Karma Yoga is for the evolved man who wants to purify and direct his will towards a definite goal which is beyond all action, so also the rituals and ceremonies associated with Hinduism are for men of lower mental and spiritual calibre. It may be well to talk of a religion which is at once scientific, philosophical, psychological,—highly reasoned out, well expressed in the most logical words, devoid of all superstitions and dogmas and rituals and ceremonies, but do we ever pause to think whether such a high form of religion can appeal to all mankind? When we are in an intellectual mood discussing a universal religion, morality and mysticism, we are apt to forget that human temperament is diverse in its workings and that the human mind requires a variety for its growth. Give the most intellectual form of religion to a man whose main path of spiritual discipline is the path of Bhakti or Divine Love. He cannot grow, nor can he even succeed in intellectually assimilating what is given him. In a similar manner, the man whose temperament and tendency draw him naturally to the path of psychological disciplines, cannot be expected to practise mainly the path of right activity or Karma Yoga. Each man must have his own main path,—his personal, spiritual and moral disciplines,—though he may be able to draw inspiration and strength from the other paths.

One naturally is inclined to conclude, therefore, that for a religion to be acceptable for all types of men, it should be scientific, psychological, rational and emotional, nay, it should be able to absorb into itself different elements that

would have a popular appeal, so that it may not leave out of its sphere of beneficent activity those who are not highly evolved but belong to the strata of the masses. Even if it were to satisfy all these conditions, it cannot become a universal faith. For, though Hinduism may be said to fulfil all these conditions, it has not become a universal religion. Even though its philosophy is a prism of many facets and contains the philosophical aspects and elements and positions of other religions,—even though it has a place for the worship of the attributeless Absolute of Buddhism, for the adoration of the Formless God with attributes of Islam and for the invocation of God as extra-cosmic personal Being of popular Christianity—it has not become the religion of the Buddhists, the Mohammedans or the Christians. Though these religions can find their counterparts in the different aspects of Vedanta, they have expressed themselves through centuries of time through set forms and fixed moulds which, in the eyes of their followers' have become inseparable from their respective associations and religious spirit. Hence it is that one is led to believe that different religions are bound to exist.

The different elements of the psychological, scientific, emotional and other paths may be seen in a greater or less degree also in religions other than Hinduism. Buddhism, for example, taking its stand upon philosophy and unreality of the universe and the need for extinguishing the sorrows and miseries of man, gives out a path of deliverance which is characteristically its own, but is it possible for Buddhism to lay claim to universality? It may be that the very truths of Buddhism are to be seen reflected in some other religions, but, for all that, Buddhism cannot expect to have adherents from the followers of other religions. Islam,

with its fierce montheism and worship of the one God without form but with attributes, is indeed a striking and forceful religion, but it cannot expect to become a universal religion, because it is not possible for it or any other single religion to combine within itself all those elements that appeal to the scientific, emotional or volitional type of man in all countries, and to the mass mind of the whole world. We often find that even within the fold of one and the same religion, there arise from time to time needs for bifurcation,—for formulation of different sects and promulgation of different doctrines. It is not a logical idea that sects are not necessary; sects themselves indubitably prove the need for the expression of the one Truth in different aspects and the need for devising suitable moral and spiritual disciplines to suit different tendencies and inclinations. Sects, therefore, are inevitable, but sectarianism can be possibly avoided and must be eliminated from the life of the followers of the different religions of the world.

Protestantism, as the word implies, came as a protest against certain views of Catholicism, and the history of Christianity in the West shows clearly that different types of minds require the presentation of even one and the same religion in different forms.

The different religions of the world, therefore, are indeed a necessity and not a superfluity and much less a curse as some of the advocates of universal religion and philosophy and universal brotherhood—of which the members, according to them, would be professing one universal religion,—would seem inclined to think. Variety and diversity are the law of nature. As the Siva Mahimna Stotra says: "The Vedic, Sankhya, Yoga, Pashupata, Vaishnava—of these different cults some say this is

the best creed, some say that. But as the ultimate destination of all rivers, be their course straight or crooked, is the great ocean, so all men, whatever path they may pursue owing to diversity of tastes, are bound for Thee."

Destruction of variety or diversity is not a desideratum as it implies the total destruction of all life, and our duty, therefore, is merely to see unity behind diversity, or singleness of purpose behind the manifold diversity of castes and creeds, of dogmas and doctrines, of sects and communities, of divisions and denominations, of rituals and dogmas, of philosophy and legend, of the higher and lower paths of the various religions of the world.

Those who are deeply imbued with the desire for missionarising and who are overzealous for making converts from the followers of religions other than their own, become blind to the great truth that these latter religions may not express the truth of God and soul and salvation in the same way in which their religion puts it. But such religions as these enthusiasts fondly hope to supplant are surely a necessity to mankind as they have fulfilled the needs of their followers for centuries. It is an oft-repeated plea of many of those who attempt proselytisation that religions other than their own contain grave defects, have serious moral drawbacks, and present perverted views regarding the duties of man.

Such missionaries do not seem to realise that they themselves live in glass houses. The monotheistic follower of Islam may not recognise the need for the approach to God in other ways than his own, nor realise that lesser gods and higher gods which are in the pantheon of the other religions are the outcome of human necessity. Islam itself permits the worship of its saints and

martyrs, but when a non-Mohammedan worships gods representing different aspects of the one God, the Mohammedan puts it down as heinous. Buddhism in its pristine form of the Gospel of the sweet and gentle Buddha never enjoined upon its followers the worship of the Enlightened One or the Arhats or the Buddha Sattwas. It did away with all rituals and ceremonials and declared simply the *path* of deliverance from sorrow, but it is an irony of religion to find that Buddhism has raised magnificent temples and lofty pagodas in which the worship of many a saint, Arhat and Bodhi Sattwa, besides that of the Buddha himself, is instituted and conducted in a most elaborate manner. It is not a strange argument that Christian missionaries adduce when they say that the Bhagawatha, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata of the Hindus are pure legends and mythologies and that there is many a passage in Hindu religious literature which is devoured by the Hindus but which is sure to produce moral stagnation and spiritual death. The Leela or the Dance of Krishna with the Gopis of Brindaban, the worship of Siva with his garland of snakes and of Rama, a purely mythological figure or a freak of fancy, the theory of incarnation which regards the fish, tortoise, bear and dwarf-man as manifestations of the Infinite and incarnations of the deity,—these are but some of the ideas of the Hindus that are subjected to slashing criticism by missionaries of non-Hindu religions for the sake of making converts. It is a pity that man often believes that destruction is an absolute need for construction. He, however, forgets that a man's mind is an organic growth from the lower to the higher and destruction of the original bases of belief is not very healthy for the growth of the human mind.

If there were no need for different religions to exist, if in His scheme of things God had planned only one single religion, and if the other religions of the world are merely accretions or superstitious growths devised by the degraded section of humanity or by honest and deluded fools who claimed to have received inspiration or attained divine knowledge, then, it is yet to be seen what that single religion is which the Creator had in view ! The idea of the propagation of a single religion or creed throughout the world at the expense of other religions and creeds is the very height of inconsistency and illogical thought mingled with sectarian ambitions and fierce fanaticism. Diversity has got to be recognised, but unity in diversity is to be understood and realised.

When we analyse the different elements of the religions of the world, we find that all of them contain mythology, ritual and ceremonial, philosophy and higher spiritual disciplines. None of the religions on earth is devoid of any of these elements. They all contain them in greater or less proportions. All these elements contain more or less bright reflections of the one Truth, and are paths in their own way to that one Truth.

But supposing we formulate a new religion in the name of a universal faith and weave into its structure all the elements that we like best and reject those threads of religious thought that appear to us as harmful to humanity, then, we shall only be making a new religion, a new sect, a new creed, without fulfilling the ambition of making it universal and of enabling all humanity to become its adherents. The problem of universal religion is as hard as the problem of universal brotherhood. When you try to form a universal brotherhood,

you are bound to formulate certain principles to be followed, but the very formulation of a principle implies the separation of the members of that brotherhood from its non-members who might not acquiesce in the principles of the newly constituted brotherhood ! It will be a brotherhood, no doubt, but it can never be a universal brotherhood ! Taking the case again of a universal language, is it possible for men the world over to speak only one tongue ? It is impossible. The science of philology proves almost beyond the shadow of a doubt that there was a time when men spoke only one language, as the study of words of different languages reveals a close affinity between different roots, but in spite of this, languages have multiplied, and even under one and the same language one finds differences and diversities of a provincial or dialectical character. In a similar manner, an attempt to bring about universality in art, in music, in poetry, in culture, in architecture, in science or in intellectual pursuits, will end in a fiasco.

But does the impossibility of founding a universal religion mean that the different religions of the world should remain in a state of clash and conflict without any kind of intimate contact ? *The answer will be in the negative.* Just as humanity exists though men and women differ in their physiognomical features, just as one life exists in the human, animal and vegetable worlds and a soul-elevating strain behind different kinds of music, so also there is a universal religion at the back of the different religions of the world. A Universal Religion needs no more to be created than a universal language, art, literature, music or science. It already exists and has only to be recognized. The different


religions of the world are but its so many shadows! As the Prasthan Bheda of Madhusudana Saraswati puts it, "In reality, all the Munis who have put forward these theories agree in wishing to prove the existence of the One Supreme Lord without a second .....These Munis cannot be in error, considering that they are omniscient :

and these different views have only been propounded by them in order to keep off all nihilistic theories, and because they were afraid that human beings, with their inclinations towards the objects of the world, cannot be expected at once to know the true goal of man." (Quoted in Max Muller's *Six Systems*. Pp. 107, 108.)

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## BUDDHA AND HIS TEACHINGS

*By Bhikku Ananda Maitreya*

ACCORDING to current view a  Buddha is a person who has realized the Truth. But in the absolute sense, the Buddha is nothing but Truth itself, or in other words, Dharmakaya. The Lord Gautama has said, "Whosoever sees Truth, he sees me." Once when he saw a disciple who spent his time almost always looking at his physical appearance, he advised him not to look at this decaying body of bones and flesh but to look at the Dharma, the Truth. This shows that the real Buddha is Truth itself. Any man, too, who has attained it perfectly and supremely, is called a Buddha in the language of the common usage. For instance, the prince Gautama realized the Truth and is named after it "the Buddha Gautama".

Now comes the second question, "What did the Buddha teach?" At a certain time the Buddha Gautama, travelling through a big forest in the company of several of his disciples, picked up some leaves and holding them in his hand asked his disciples which was greater in number, either the leaves in his hand or those in the vast forest. They answered that the leaves in the forest far outnumbered those in his hand. Then the Buddha added, "In exactly the same way, what

I have not given to the world is far greater than what I have actually taught. I teach you only those things which are conducive to freedom from sorrow." This shows that as regards those things which do not lead to freedom from sorrow, the Buddha was silent. This is because his only aim was to lead the suffering world to the Real Happiness. This specific teaching of the Buddha consists of four facts, namely, the truths concerning the existence of sorrow, of its cause, of freedom therefrom and of the way leading thereto.

Let us try here to understand what is meant by the first truth concerning the existence of sorrow. It is said that what we call man, in reality, is not an ego entity, an unchanging substance, but a process of changes. In absolute sense, there is no man but mind and body (Nama and Rupa). Mind too is a process of thoughts and their concomitants succeeding each other. Every thought with its concomitants exists only for a moment and ceases then and there, which is uninterruptedly followed by another thought. Thus what we call mind is only a process of states void of an eternal individual ego. The body, the material side of the life, too, is a flux of the masses of atoms.

Like the waves of the sea these masses of atoms continue to exist in a state of flux. Thus existence, by which we mean only a continuous change in the elements of mind and matter, is not real—it being only a phenomenon. Hence you do not find a lasting happiness in such an existence. It is this absence of reality, this phenomenal existence devoid of happiness, which is termed *Dukkha* (lit, sorrow). Failure to grasp this fact leads humanity to mistake the fleeting enjoyments of this phenomenal existence for the lasting bliss, of which they are in search. Thus mentally blind, the ignorant worldling, the slave of cravings and delusions, does not see and understand that the so-called worldly enjoyments are but a mirage in the desert of *Samsara*. So long as they are under the sway of the thirst for these illusions of the world, they make no effort to get rid of it, which results in continued births in the world. Thus the cause of the continuity of these ills, of these unrealities, of these wearisome vanities lies in the sorrows themselves, and it is *Tanha* (Skt. *Trishna*), the craving for the worldly existence. The moth, as it does not know how destructive and dangerous to it is the flame, craves for it, clings to it and does not like to leave it or go off it. Even with its wings partly burnt, it rushes over and over again to the flame and is least aware of the consequences. In exactly the same way sentient beings, owing to their ignorance (*Avidya*) of their nature, cling to worldly things and are thus bound to them. Various forms of woes, sorrows and tribulations are the consequence of this craving. In Buddhist terminology this is called "the truth of the cause of sorrow."

Some scholars, either due to their religious fanaticism or because they have not a first hand knowledge of

Buddhism, try to prove Buddhism to be a pessimistic religion. But it is neither pessimistic nor optimistic, for it teaches that both the extremes are dangerous alike. While it speaks of the sorrows of the world, it turns the head of the hearer towards a bliss, the everlasting happiness which is the One Reality. It makes man hopeful and consoles the sorrow-stricken. Thus while Buddhism speaks of the sorrows on the one hand, it points out the real happiness on the other, though our short-sighted or prejudiced critiques are so ignorant as to take only one side of it and complain that it is pessimistic.

The cause of the disease being removed altogether, the patient is cured; for the cause being removed the effect is no more. So the cause of sorrow, that is craving, being removed, the renewal of its effects, the continuity of illusive existence, ceases, and there will be the polar opposite of what is illusive, —the Reality, the Perfect Peace, the Everlasting Happiness, the Incomparable Light, or rather if we were to name it in our current usage—the Eternal Life. This Reality, being devoid of both mind and matter, cannot be said to be reborn. The Pali form of this, *Nibbana*, literally means 'what is bond-free' or 'what is realized at the freedom from craving,' and the nearest English equivalent of it perhaps is 'Holiness.' Some people try to seek *Nibbana* either in mind or in matter, and finding it in neither, they say "Nirvana (Skt. *Nirvana*) is 'nothingness' or 'annihilation.' *Nibbana* however, as it has been pointed out by the Buddha, is by no means nothingness; though it is neither mind nor matter, it is a third possibility. So long as we do not realize ourselves it is a very difficult task to realize *Nibbana*.

To the man born blind the sun, the moon and the stars are imperceptible

because they are beyond the reach of his senses through which he can come into contact with a visible object. Does it mean that there are no stars and planets? He, lacking his organ of sight, is blind to their existence. But this does not prove that there are no such objects or that there are no people who can see them. Likewise Nibbana is not clearly visible to the worldling in whom the eye of Perfect Insight is still not opened and this does not prove that it is an emptiness. It is only to the holy that Nibbana is clearly visible as their mind's eye is clear enough to see it.

To the fish land is nothingness, and if anybody were to tell it something about land it would ask him, "Does the land flow? Has it waves? Can one swim in it?" The fish associates land with what is familiar to it. Likewise the worldling thinks of Nibbana in terms of what he has; and when it is beyond the range of his mental vision he mistakes it for annihilation or nothingness.

There are stars far away which we cannot see except with the aid of a telescope. Likewise there is a state that can be seen and attained only by Perfect and Holy Insight. That we cannot see those stars with unaided eyes does not mean that there are no such stars. In like manner since Nibbana is invisible to the worldly eye, it does not mean that it is nothingness. The born-blind cannot even imagine what vision is, and that does not prove that vision is nothingness. This vision must be developed within oneself. So is the case with the realization of Nibbana. It is said that during the life time of an Arhat he experiences Nibbana which is termed in Buddhist Doctrine as the Enjoyment of the Bliss of Emancipation. (Vimutti-Sukha or Phala-Samapatti.) Now, if Nibbana means nothingness, what is implied by saying that

it is experienced! Can nothingness be experienced?

Heat has its opposite in cold. The sweet scent is contrary to evil smelling. Health is the opposite of sickness. Even so, there is a State Absolute, a Bliss real, eternal, pure and serene, which is quite contrary to sorrow, and it is called Nirvana, the goal and aspiration of all holy ones. So runs the Buddhist Sutra:—There is, O Bhikkhus, that which is unborn, unmanifested, uncreated and unconditioned. If there were not, O Bhikkhus, this that is unborn.....there could not be cognized an escape from what is born, manifested, composed and conditioned. But inasmuch as there exists what is unborn, unmanifested, uncreated and unconditioned, therefore is cognized the escape from what is born, manifested, created and conditioned."

This eternal Reality, the everlasting Bliss, at the realization of which one destroys for ever the cause of all sorrows and tribulations—the attainment of this highest peace is the goal of Buddhism. This is termed "the cessation of sorrow."

The only way to destroy the cause of disease is to find a remedy for it. The cause of sorrow being the thirst for existence in the world, as mentioned above, its destruction will annihilate sorrow. A man craves for illusions as he misunderstands them for realities, and this misunderstanding is the outcome of delusion, i.e., the lack of insight into what is sorrow, its cause, its end and the way therefor. Where this misunderstanding, this delusion (Avidya), is absent there is no more craving, and delusion or spiritual darkness is dispersed before the light of insight. And how do we attain this insight? No virtue is built on fickle-mindedness, but on a serene, calm and firm mind, which is developed through concentration

(Samadhi). Concentration of mind depends on right conduct, the control of both words and deeds (*i. e.* Sila). Thus it is now evident that the only way to realization is the threefold path, namely the practice of right conduct (Sila), mind culture or concentration (Samadhi), and the development of insight (Prajna) by discrimination of what is real and what is unreal (Vidarsana). Going along this course one improves oneself by degrees and at last realizes the four truths

perfectly, and thus understanding sorrow, he destroys its cause, craving, sees Nibbana with his mind's eye and reaches the end of the Holy Path. This function is called in Buddhist terminology "the Realization of Truth" (Satyavabodha or Bodhi). The so-called realization takes place four times and destroys gradually all delusion (Avidya) and its offshoot, craving, (Trishna) with all their concomitant evils; and thus when a person reaches perfection, we call him an Arhat, a Jivanmukta.

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

*By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao*

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Dream is for him who mistakes one thing for another. Sleep is for him who is ignorant of the nature of Reality (Tattva). When the wrong superimpositions in both states disappear, one attains the Turiya state. (15)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

The answer is given to the question as to when a firm knowledge of Turiya arises. In the two states of dream and waking, there occurs the dream of mistaking one thing for another, like seeing the snake in the rope. Sleep, that is, ignorance of Reality (Tattva) is common to all the three states. As dream and sleep are common to Viswa and Taijasa, these two are classed as one. Here the primary thing is wrongly knowing (Atman as something else). Sleep is a secondary matter. Therefore the chief superimposition is dream. In the third state, sleep in the form of ignorance of the Reality (Tattva) is the only superimposition. In these two states (waking and

dream) there are wrong knowledge and ignorance (Avidya) in the form of effect and cause. When this bondage of the nature of effect and cause is removed (on the dawn of true knowledge of Atman) there is the attainment of the state of Turiya. That is to say, where the two varieties of bondage disappear, there is a firm establishment of Turiya.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

When the Jiva awakes from the sleep of beginningless Maya, he realises the unborn, the sleepless, the dreamless and the non-dual Turiya. (16)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

In dream, due to beginningless Maya of the dual form of the root-cause, ignorance (Avidya) and wrong knowledge, the Jiva merged in Samsara (phenomenal world) will be without true knowledge (in sleeping) and be experiencing in the two states (waking and dream) such dreams as 'this is my father, 'this is my son,' 'my grandson, my fields,' 'my domestic animals (such

as cows, etc.), 'I am the master of all those,' 'I am happy,' 'I am miserable,' 'I am ruined by this man' and 'I am saved by this man,' etc. When taught by (initiated by) a teacher (Guru), who is well versed in Vedanta and who is very kind-hearted, to this effect, namely, 'You are not of the nature of cause and effect' but 'That thou art,' he will come to have true knowledge of Reality (Tattva.) If it is asked how, the reply is that in this (Turiya), there is neither externally nor internally any change such as birth (growth, old age, death, etc.). Therefore it is unborn, as the Sruti says that it is not subject to any change either external or internal. The meaning is that it is totally devoid of any change incidental to existing (things). As it has no sleep or root-cause, Avidya, which gives rise to birth (and other changes), it is said to be ever sleepless (ever awake.) As there is no sleep in Turiya, there is also no dream: this is because sleep is the cause of wrong knowledge. As it has neither sleep nor dream, it is unborn, non-dual, and the Turiya is realised as one's own Atman.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

The dual world can go, only if it has (any sort of) existence; there is no doubt of this. But the duality is mere Maya (superimposition). On the realisation of the truth, there is only non-duality. (17)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

It may be objected: If the true knowledge arises only when the world goes, how can there be non-duality when the world does not go (disappear). To this is replied (as follows): True, if the world has any (real) existence, it can go (as you think). (The real answer seems to be that there is no meaning in speaking of the disappearance

of an unreal world). As it is only superimposed like a snake on a rope, it does not exist. If it (is seen as) existing, it cannot go (disappear). There is no doubt of it. The snake superimposed by Maya on a rope, does not exist in the rope and does not disappear on the rise of true knowledge. Similarly, the illusion produced by a juggler does not really exist in the sight of the seers and does not disappear afterwards. Thus the duality spoken of as the world is mere superimposition (Maya)—just as in the rope and the juggler (in the illustration), when properly considered, there is only non-duality. So the purport of the whole is that no sort of world comes (exists) or goes (disappears).

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

If this superimposition had been the work of anybody, it would disappear. All this talk is for the purpose of initiation. When knowledge dawns, there is no duality. (18)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

It is objected: If so, how does the duality of a teacher, scriptures and the pupil ever disappear? To this is replied: The superimposition might disappear, if it had been the work of anybody. Just as this world is Maya like the superimposition of a snake on a rope, so also the superimposition of pupil, (teacher, scriptures), etc., is for the purpose of initiation (of the pupil) before the dawn of knowledge. So all the talk about pupil, teacher and scriptures is for the sake of initiation. If as the result of initiation, a true knowledge of Reality (Tattva) arises, there will be no duality.

### *Upanishad*

This Atman, considered from the point of view of words (syllables), is Om, made up of its constituent

(feet or quarters). The feet are the syllables and the syllables are the feet. (The syllables) are A, U and M. (8)

*Sankara's Commentary*

From the point of view of the subject-matter of the discourse, Om, made up of four constituents or parts, has been described as Atman. Such an Atman from the point of view of the constituent syllables is now described as made up of syllables. To the question as to what that word is, we reply that it is Om. The Om is divided into constituent syllables. The constituent parts of Atman form the syllables of Om. What are they? They are A, U and M.

*Upanishad*

Vaiswanara whose sphere is the waking state is the first syllable A, either because he is all-pervasive or he is the first (of the three). He who knows this has all his desires fully satisfied and is the first of all. (9)

*Sankara's Commentary*

The Sruti specifies as to which is which. Vaiswanara whose sphere is the waking state, is the first foot (syllable) of Om, that is A. To the question as to the existence of any similarity between the two, the answer is "the all-pervasiveness". Sruti says, "A pervades all words." Similarly Vaiswanara pervades the whole world. Sruti also says, "To the Atman known as Vaiswanara, the radiant upper region forms the head." We have already spoken of the identity of name and the thing named. Because a thing is at the beginning, we speak of it as the first. Just as A is the first among the letters, so Vaiswanara is the first (of the three). From this similarity also we may speak of Vaiswanara as A. The results

of a knowledge of this identity are now described. He who knows this identity described above, that is, that Vaiswanara and A are one, has all his desires fulfilled and becomes the first of all great men.

*Upanishad*

Taijasa whose sphere is dream is the second foot (syllable) U, either because of superiority or of occupying the middle position. He who knows this increases his knowledge harmoniously: and he remains equal to anybody. In his family, no one ignorant of Brahman will be born. (10)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Taijasa whose sphere is dream is the second foot (syllable) of Om, that is U. To the question as to the existence of any similarity between the two, the answer is 'superiority'. U is superior to A. Taijasa is superior to Vaiswanara. Or as U is between A and M, Taijasa is between Vaiswanara and Pragna. Taijasa and U are in relation to two. The result of a knowledge of this is now described. He who knows in this way, increases his knowledge in a harmonious manner (without undergoing any occasional decrease). By being 'equal' is meant that just as he is liked by his friends, he is not disliked by his enemies. In his family, there will be no one who has not a true knowledge of Brahman.

*Upanishad*

Pragna whose sphere is deep sleep is the third foot (syllable) M, either on account of its being the measure or because of its becoming latent. He who knows this is able to measure all this and forms the basis in which everything becomes latent. (11)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Pragna whose sphere is (dreamless) sleep is the third foot (syllable) M. To the question as to the existence of any similarity between the two, the answer is "measure". Just as barley is measured by Prastha (measure), so Pragna may be said to measure Viswa and Taijasa, when these two enter into (become latent in) Pragna and come out of (take their origin from) him during involution and evolution respectively. Similarly when Om is pronounced once and repeated immediately afterwards, it looks as if A and U enter into and come out of M. Or they may be said to become latent in M, that is, become one with it. When

Om is pronounced, A and U appear to become merged in, that is, become one with, the last letter M. Similarly in (dreamless) sleep, Viswa and Taijasa become one with Pragna. From this similarity also, Pragna and M are one. The result of knowing this is described. By saying that Pragna is the measurer, it is meant that he knows the real nature of the universe. By saying that in him are merged (Viswa and Taijasa), he becomes the Atman, the cause of the universe. The description of the result of the inner knowledge of Atman is to praise the chief means of attaining it.

The following Slokas (verses of the Karika) exist in connection with this.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

**New Year Greetings**

With May 1932 The Vedanta Kesari enters into the 19th year of its existence. We wish to send our greetings on this occasion to one and all of our readers and contributors, and thank them heartily for the interest they have been all along evincing in our paper. In these days of political conflict and economic uncertainties, it is seldom that people keep their minds calm and collected, and devote a part of their attention at least to those cultural questions of wider and more abiding interest. Man as body looms more in their eyes than man as mind or spirit. Questions of the moment attract their notice more than the everlasting problems that confront the human mind. The immediate monopolises their attention to the wholesale exclusion of the eternal. Under such adverse circumstances, it has been the aim of the Vedanta Kesari to focus the attention of the public on these questions which the more popular agencies of the day either neglect or notice in a very inadequate manner. The importance of this task, especially in a country like India, need hardly be told. India lives

today not through the stability of her political or economic organisation. These have been shattered time and again, but yet she has survived through the continuity of her cultural traditions. It was her culture, suffused as it is by the spiritual instincts of the race, that formed the last rallying point for her children when political power and economic eminence passed away from their midst. This spiritual culture therefore forms the very vital principle of our race, and as long as its ideals are remembered and respected by us, our life as a nation is beyond the danger of extinction. It has been the aim of the Vedanta Kesari to expound the spiritual ideals of India in all their implications.

But our task has been not one of interpretation alone. India can no longer afford to move in the age-long rut. While we are to regulate our lives according to the great ideals embodied in our scriptures, we cannot however cut ourselves aloof from the new thought currents that are agitating the minds of men today. The great conflicts between faith and reason, between scripture and free thought, between

religion and science cannot be left out of account at the present day, and it has therefore been our endeavour to voice forth the attitude of Indian thought towards these momentous questions. We have to conduct a self-criticism, or an examination of our own institutions in the light of the ideals inherited from the past and the present, and make an estimate of their excellences as well as defects, so that we may not in future be led away by false hopes and expectations. The Vedanta Kesari has been doing its little mite in this direction also.

We earnestly pray to the Almighty that we may be rendered capable of discharging this arduous task in a more efficient manner.

### Hindu Ethics

In the place of Prayers which have been appearing on the first page of every issue of the Vedanta Kesari, we propose to present to our readers from this month onwards a new series of quotations from the Sanskrit Scriptures, that speak of the Hindu Ethical culture and its indispensability for the realisation of God-vision or divine illumination.

The bonds of the world are said to be cut asunder through the mercy of God. "This mercy," declares Swami Vivekananda "comes on the pure. So purity is the condition of His mercy." In spite of what false Vedantins and false critics of Hinduism may say, all the Hindu scriptures and spiritual teachers proclaim with one voice what the Katha Upanishad clearly points out, "He who has not first turned away from wickedness, who is not tranquil and subdued, whose mind is not at rest, can never realise the Self even by knowledge." True knowledge can never be acquired by the impure soul, and even if he comes to possess it by some means or other, it cannot free him from the bonds of the world and help him to attain to the peace and blessedness that come through the experience of the highest Truth.

Purity, some may hold, is the effect of Divine Grace. Whether it is the condition or the effect of Grace, or is acquired through self-effort, there is no

doubt that it is essential to the acquirement of the highest knowledge and highest devotion, which to the truly realised soul imply the same spiritual experience expressed but in different terms.

The Upanishads dwell more on the highest truth than on the ethical code leading to its realisation. This is due not to the neglect of ethics as many superficial thinkers suppose but to the fact that the Upanishads are meant for the highly advanced souls who have already passed through the relative or ordinary moral code embodied in the Dharma Sutras and other Smritis, Itihasas and Puranas, which always lay down graduated courses of ethical culture, suited to people in different stages of evolution. As the Mundaka Upanishad declares, the Upanishadic conception of the Absolute Brahman and the absolute code of the Upanishadic ethics, that transcend both 'Good and Evil', are meant for those "whose thoughts are not troubled by any desires and who have attained to mental peace." It is well known alike to the aspirant as well as to the sincere student of Vedanta—a fact strongly stressed by the great Sankaracharya—that in order to be a true *Adhikari* or recipient of the highest knowledge, one must pass through a rigorous and systematic moral discipline. And this is to be done so that the relative morality of the preliminary stage may be transformed into the absolute morality of the Perfect, which comes to a person with the dawn of the highest knowledge or the experience of the One.

The fully realised seer rises above the duality of subject and object, as also above the distinction of what is called in ordinary vocabulary as "good" and "evil". Rightly does Prof. Max Muller observe, "This is never intended as freedom in the sense of license, but as freedom that can neither lapse into sinful acts, nor claim any merit for good acts, being at rest and blessed in itself and Brahman." In the words of Sri Ramakrishna, the man of self-realisation, like the expert dancer, can never take a false step, although he does not care like the beginner, to follow every rule by a special effort of the will. In whatever

he does, he is in full accord with the highest ethics, and is rightly said to be above the distinctions of relative good and relative evil.

It is the realisation of the One that serves as a secure foundation of absolute morality spoken of in the Upanishads and other scriptures. "The wise man who perceives all objects as existing in the Atman—his own Self and the Atman in every being,—hates none", says the Upanishadic seer. He not only hates none but loves all as his own Self.

Why should we love another? "The answer," very truly points out Dr. Duessen, "is not in the Bible, but it is in the Veda, in the great formula, '*Tat Twam Asi*'—That Thou art—which gives in three words metaphysics and morals all together." The same idea is expressed in the Bhagavad Gita by Sri Krishna, when he speaks of the man of God-vision—"Seeing the Lord equally existent everywhere, he injures not the Self by Self", and not only that, he becomes, as declared elsewhere, "engaged in the good of all beings." Morality has, thus, its foundations on the Eternal Principle, on the experience and knowledge of the Atman. The neighbour is to be loved not merely as oneself but as the One Self.

According to all great schools of Vedanta the soul of man is pure by nature and spiritual life is not a thing superadded to the natural man by an extraneous spiritual agency. This spiritual nature is potential in all, and the task of religion, as of the religious teacher, is to manifest this latent divinity. As dirt cannot wash away dirt, the thought of sin cannot remove sin. The idea, nay, the experience, of man as of God's pure and divine nature, alone is the surest remedy to remove sin and also its root cause ignorance. This is the real spirit of Vedanta and of Hinduism. Understanding in this true light one cannot but exclaim with Prof. Duessen, "The Vedanta in its unfalsified form is the strongest support of pure morality, is the greatest consolation in the sufferings of life and death. Indians, keep to it!"

We are eminently fortunate in being able to secure for this and some successive numbers of the Vedanta Kesari, Dr. Mahendranath Sircar's scholarly and illuminating article on the Ethics of the Upanishads. As the readers will see for themselves, that ethical culture serves as a stepping stone to the realisation of the highest, and also finds in it its fullest realisation, its rationale, its meaning and purpose.

### Literacy and Soul-force

Prof. Ernest P. Horowitz has sent us the following note entitled 'Literacy and Soul-force': Swami Nirlopananda (Vedanta Kesari, December 1931) pleads for village revival and Shakti-cultivation in Indian youth. India is helpless, he thinks, because she is dependent. At the end of the instructive article, Swamiji mentions London and Leningrad in one breath, although the political sociology of the two cities is diametrically opposite.

Some years ago, when visiting the Khyber Pass, I planned an aerial hop from Kabul to Tashkent. I wished to travel in Tadjikistan which, like Mongolia, is a Soviet Socialist State. The Tadjiks are Iranians by blood and tongue, and profess the Mahomedan faith. They have all learned to read and write, but in their mother tongue. Soviet education is a kind of 'forced labour' with them, compulsory Swaraj-discipline. The young Tadjik does not study Russian; if he learns a foreign language at all, he rather takes up Persian. Teaching given in the native tongue constitutes the fundamental difference between the Asiatic Soviet Republics and their territorial neighbours ruled by the British Raj. In Indian schools, pupils learn to read and write in the language of their colonizers, so that they are drawn nearer to the governing nation, and get farther away from their own folks. Soviet education in Asia is not provided through the medium of Russian. As a matter of fact, when it came to choosing a new alphabet to replace the traditional Arabic script, Latin letters and not Russian characters were adopted in Tadjikistan by

vote in sympathy with the precedent set in progressive Turkey.

Two principal school topics in Tadjikistan are 'Collective Economy' (as opposed to 'Individual Initiative', the basis of the tottering, capitalistic, imperialistic system) and 'History and Meaning of Leninism'. In the Schools of India and England, Collectivism and Leninism are almost prohibited ground and '*terra incognita*' although Romain Rolland, the champion of the French intelligentsia, seems to think that the two 'vital subjects' will one day be the 'red thread' of English, French and German education, say about the year 1950. Again, Indian boys are taught 'ideological history', as they call it in Moscow, based on fancy, fable and fiction, rather than on objective facts and hard realities; furthermore they learn more Anglo-Indian and English than Indian history, and all this they are shown through the dim eye of aging 'westernism' and the senile glory of empire. Tadjik boys are familiarised, in the foremost place, with Asiatic history, and are taught to contemplate modern mass movements and the people's aspirations, not from a

national and even less from a Russian or British view-point, but as so many forward steps toward economic co-operation and universal brotherhood. All instruction is made picturesque and realistic, actual and material; 'hist-mat' is a Soviet abbreviation for historical materialism. The Sankhya philosophers and Buddha himself were "materialists" in the sense in which Soviet scholars understand the word. 'Realists' (Satya-Bhaktas) would be a more appropriate term to express the cream and essence of Soviet educators.

Tadjikistan has changed marvellously in the last five years. Illiteracy is almost liquidated; boys and girls can all read and write. They all receive a sound elementary political education; so that they can take an independent attitude in communal and labour questions and collaborate with follow-workers, not as social bondsmen (such they were in Czarist times) but as economic freemen, and not in a sulky but in a cheerful spirit, in the glorious self-government and industrialisation of their fertile land, which goes ahead by leaps and bounds.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Birthday Celebration at Colombo

The 70th and 97th Birthdays of the Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna were celebrated with due *eclat* by the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Wellawatte, Colombo on Sundays the 7th February and the 13th March respectively.

On the 7th February the celebration of the Birthday of the Swami Vivekananda began with Pooja and devotional music with accompaniments, at 8-30 A. M. At 10 A. M. leaflets containing the select teachings of the Swami Vivekananda were distributed and read out to the audience. The afternoon session began with a religious concert given by the Ananda Samajaya of Colombo from 3-30 to 4-30 P. M. This was followed up by a public meeting which was presided over by Mr. C. Nagalingam, Advocate. Mr. H. Nallaiah, B. A., the

Editor of the Vira Kosari, the local Tamil daily, spoke eloquently in Tamil and Mr. Sri Nissanka, Bar-at-law, spoke with fervour in English on the Life and Teachings of the revered Swamiji. The last to speak on the subject of the day was Pandit K. C. Nathan who kept the audience spell-bound for about an hour with his Tamil lecture. The proceedings came to a close with a Katha Prasangam in Tamil by Pandit K. C. Nathan with accompaniments by Vidwan Retnaswami Iyer and others on the Life of the Swamiji.

The Celebration of the 97th Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna which came off on the 13th March was a unique function inasmuch as a Conference of Religions of the Island, which was the first of its kind in the annals of the religious history of Ceylon, formed a special

feature. It began at 8 A. M. with Pooja and devotional music by the Boys of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home at Batticaloa. The first session of the Conference of Religions as well as the second session began at 9 A. M. and 4 P. M., respectively and lasted for two hours each. They were both presided over by Swami Ghanananda, and representatives of the religions of the Island spoke or read their papers. Saiva Siddhanta and Hinduism were represented by Mr. S. Sivapadasundaram, B. A., and Swami Jagadiswarananda; Islam and Zoroastrianism by Messrs. T. B. Jayah, B. A., and D. Choksy, B.A.; Buddhism by the Rev. Bhikku Ananda Maitreya of Balangoda, and Christianity by Rev. D. Karunaretna and Rev. Francis Kingsbury, B. A. Leaflets containing the select sayings of Sri Ramakrishna were then distributed and read out to the gathering. The "Celebration Meeting" was presided over by Mr. S. Sivapadasundaram, B. A., and lectures on the Life and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna were delivered by Messrs. H. M. Desai and D. C. R. Gunawardene in English, and by Pandit K. C. Nathan in Tamil. The day's function came to a close with a Katha Prasangam in Tamil by Pandit K. C. Nathan with accompaniments by Vidwan Retnaswami Iyer and party.

The celebrations were conducted in specially erected Pandals facing the sea and attended by a numerous concourse of devotees and friends. The Daridra Narayana Seva (the Feeding of the Poor) in connection with the celebrations was done on the 20th March.

The usual broadcast talks were given by Swami Ghanananda on "Swami Vivekananda and His life and Teachings" and on "Sri Ramakrishna and His Place in the History of Modern Religious Thought", before the days of the celebrations.

### Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Rangoon

The object of this Sevashrama has always been to give asylum to those who are helpless when dark days of starvation, old age and disease overtake them and make them feel the want of a helping hand. The tenth annual report, which the management has brought out, opens with a reference to the sad fire accident that took place in the office room on 23rd January, 1931 and totally burned the thatched building with almost all its belongings. Owing to the immediate action of the Fire Brigade the fire was controlled to such an extent that some of the valuable records were saved although in a half-burnt condition, and it was from those that the present report could be compiled at all. During the year the total attendance of patients was 1,21,644, of whom a considerable number hailed from the suburbs and from the remote districts of Burma. The indoor department has provision for 114 beds, 84 for men and 30 for women. The admissions there came up to 2136 and 336 respectively. The average daily attendance was 67'8 in the section for males, 13'4 in that for females and 1 in that for children. The out-patient department treated 91,612 cases, of which 40,834 were new. The contributions, donations, subscriptions, etc., amounted to over Rs. 42,000. A loan of Rs. 4,240 had to be taken, but that has since been paid up. The expenses amounted to Rs. 41,000 and odd, thus leaving a small credit balance for the new year. The management feels grateful to all its benefactors and repeat their appeals to the public to help the institution forward, as hitherto, with their generous contributions.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XIX]

JUNE, 1932

[No. 2

## HINDU ETHICS

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अन्यच्छ्रेयोऽन्यदुतैव प्रेयस्ते उभे नालार्थं पुण्यं सिनीतः ।

तयो श्रेय आददानस्य साधुर्भवति ह्रीयतेऽप्याय उ प्रेयो वृणीते ॥

श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतस्तौ संपरीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः ।

श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभिप्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमाद् वृणीते ॥

The good is one thing, the pleasant another. These two having different objects chain a man. It is well with him who clings to the good ; but loses he the goal, who chooses the pleasant.

Both the good and the pleasant approach a man. The wise distinguish them having examined them well. Verily the wise man prefers the good to the pleasant, but the fool chooses the pleasant through avarice and attachment.

KATHA UPANISHAD

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

*(Continued from page 5)*

## THE MASTER IN BHAVA MUKHA

### *Girish under Training*

**T**HE Master has always taught us never to do violence to others' faith. And he himself used to observe this maxim in his relations with each devotee. Having won over Girish in the aforesaid manner, he began henceforth to give him instructions suited to his particular line of thought. One day in connection with a trifling matter, Girish remarked in the presence of the Master, "I shall do it". At once the Master corrected him saying, "What is this? Why do you say so egoistically, 'I shall do'? Suppose you fail? You should say instead, 'God willing, I shall do.'" Girish understood the Master and thought within himself, "That's right. When I have completely surrendered myself to the Lord, and he too has accepted me, I can do a thing only if he considers it proper and good for me, and permits me to do it. Otherwise, how can I do it myself?" From that time onwards he began to give up such egoistic thoughts and words as mentioned above.

### *The deeper meaning of 'Power of Attorney'*

Days after days thus rolled on. In course of time the Master passed

away. And as for Girish, the death of his wife and child and similar bereavements and calamities overtook him. But as before, in every case he used to say to himself, "The Master has allowed these things to take place because he considers them good for me. I have given him my charge and he too has taken it. But he has never made any contract with me as to the particular path by which he will lead me. So I have no right to grudge, nor say 'nay' to what happens. Otherwise, is my giving him the power of attorney, my surrendering to him, mere empty words?" In this way, as days passed on, Girish began to realise more and more the deeper significance of self-surrender. Even now \* has he been able to grasp it fully? When questioned about it he replies, "Still there is much left for me to understand. I could not realise at first that this power of attorney meant so much! I find now that there is an end to prayers and penances, but not to the practice of self-surrender. The person who has given to the Lord his power of

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\* This volume of Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master, was written during the life time of Sjt. Girish Chandra Ghose.

attorney has got to scrutinise every moment—when he takes a breath or moves a step—whether he does so through the power of the Lord or through the strength of his own self."

*Divine Incarnations alone Able to  
Bear the Burden of Others*

Various are the thoughts that arise in connection with this question of the power of attorney. We learn from a study of the history of the world that only great souls like Jesus and Chaitanya have at times given assurance to some and have taken on themselves their charge. Ordinary religious teachers or holy men have neither the capacity nor the authority to do so. They can at best imitate others in spiritual practices, in the mysteries of the holy names, rituals and ceremonials, following which they themselves have attained spiritual progress. Or by leading a holy life themselves, they may draw others to the path of purity. But it is beyond their capacity to help a man when he, entangled in the meshes of the world, is lost in utter helplessness, and on being asked to follow a certain course cries out in despair, "How am I to do it? I can, only if you give me the necessary strength."

"I take on myself the burden of thy sins, and in your place I shall suffer"—It is impossible for a man to make such a promise to another man and fulfil it. Divine Incarnations alone can do so. Whenever in society virtue degrades and vice prevails the Lord in His infinite

mercy incarnates Himself. He atones for the sins of men and redeems them from the whirls of misery in which they are caught. But although He does so, He does not exempt them fully. With a view to teach them a lesson He makes them go through some amount of suffering. As the Master used to say, through the grace of the Incarnation, the sufferings of ten lives are over in one. This is true of individuals as well as of society.

*Illustrations of Grace*

This act of grace is mentioned by various names in different scriptures. In the Gita it is spoken of as the gift of the divine vision which enabled Arjuna to realise the universal form of the Lord; in the Puranas as the acquisition of the divine grace; in the Bengali Vaishnava scriptures as the redemption of the wicked like Jagai and Madhai or the repression of wickedness; in Christianity as the vicarious atonement of Jesus, or his taking on himself the sins and sufferings of others to quench the divine ire. It would not have been possible for us to be convinced of the reality of grace had we not got glimpses of it in the life of Sri Ramakrishna himself.

*Sri Ramakrishna's Vision*

During the time when the Master was staying at Shyampukur in Calcutta, whither he had gone for treatment, one day he saw that his subtle body had gone out of the gross and was wandering about!

Speaking of this he said, "I saw that it had got ulcers spreading over its entire back. I was thinking why it was so. Then Mother showed me that people come and touch the body after having committed all sorts of sinful acts, and seeing their plight, I feel pity and am moved to take on myself all their sins. As a result of repeatedly doing this, the body has become so." He said (pointing to his own throat), "For the same reason I have got this disease also. Otherwise why should there be so much suffering for this body? It has never done anything wrong." We were all dumfounded to hear this, and thought, "Is it really possible for one to suffer for another's sin and thereby help him in his spiritual progress?" And many amongst us also thought within ourselves out of our love for the Master, "Alas, alas, why have we come after doing many evil and deceitful acts and touched him? And he is passing through so much of suffering and pain because of us! Never shall we touch his divine person hereafter."

#### *The Master's Healing Leucoderma*

In this connection we are reminded of another incident in the life of the Master. At one time a person suffering from leucoderma approached him and piteously entreated him to cure him of his disease. He said that he would be free from it, only if the Master would pass his hand over the diseased part. With great compassion the Master told him, "My dear man, I do not know anything. But since you press me

I shall pass my hands over you. If it is the will of the Divine Mother, you shall be healed." Saying this he touched the man. Throughout that day the Master felt a great pain in his hand, so much so that he became restless, and addressing the Divine Mother he said, "Mother, I shall never do such a thing again". The Master used to tell us, "The man was healed but his sufferings were undergone by this (pointing to his own) body." From these incidents in the Master's life it seems to us that in this age the truths of the scriptures—the Vedas and the Bible, the Purana and the Koran—can be easily understood in the light thrown by the Master's life. He himself has told us, "Well, the coins of one age cannot pass current in another". In the present age we need the current coin.

#### *Power of Attorney—not an easy Affair*

At first sight one may think that it is an easy affair to give the power of attorney, that it may be done whenever one pleases. But actually it is not so. Man is a creature of his passions, and he seeks his own pleasures even when he comes to lead a spiritual life. He always tries to find how he can secure both the world and God, earthly pleasure and divine bliss. He considers worldly pleasures and enjoyments so sweet and delicious that at the very thought of giving them up he feels an utter void all round, and says to himself, "What is there to live

for?" That is why he jumps at the idea that, as in the material world, it is possible to give the power of attorney in the realm of spirituality also. He thinks, "What is there to worry me hereafter? I may steal, swindle or cheat, or do as I please, and enjoy the world as much as I can, and after death—for some day or other I must die—let Chaitanya, Jesus or Ramakrishna look at my happiness in the other world." He does not understand that all this is only a deceptive trick of his own cunning mind. He does not realise that he is perpetually cheating himself in this way. He does not know that, being afraid to see the hideous consequences of his misdeeds, he is wantonly hoodwinking himself and rushing towards destruction. It does not occur to him that some day some one will forcibly remove the blinkers and he will find himself to be at sea, knowing that no one has ever accepted the power of attorney of a hypocrite like himself. Alas, man! In what all diverse ways art thou deceiving thyself, and yet thou thinkest, "I have won my point fully!" And blessed art Thou, the great Maya, the Mother of illusion! What an enchantment hast Thou spread over the minds of men! What Ramprasad has sung addressing Thee is fully true:

## SONG

Bravo, Thou Merciful Mother of the universe\*!

What a world-illusion hast Thou created!

Thy feet are like the juggler's balls,  
And these Thou hast placed on the bosom of Shiva.

What a queer enchantress art Thou!  
Thou hast made Shiva—Thy Consort—appear like a mad man!

And taking on the Gunas, Thou hast become both the souls and the universe.

This doubt arises in my mind—

Will it be possible for thee, O Ramprasad, to attain those Feet,

Which Shiva even has not been able to make His own?

(Thou art hoping for the impossible.)

I fear thou too hast become mad.

\*Ramprasad, the great eighteenth century Bengali devotee, who attained to Divine realisation through the power of his songs, refers to the classic figure of Kali standing on her consort Shiva lying like a corpse. In this symbolic representation, Shiva stands for God in His absolute aspect, and Kali for God with attributes, creating, protecting and withdrawing the soul and the universe, and also supporting them in a subtle form even after destruction. The Divine Mother's feet are spoken of as being the cause of the spell of illusion like the small balls of the juggler. And it is by attaining them or making them one's own that one can go beyond all Maya or enchantment and realise God both in His relative and absolute aspects.

## THE MENACE OF SECULARISM

**R**ELIGIONISTS have always had a notoriety for their mutual intolerance sprung from an unwholesome rivalry for monopolising the conscience of mankind. In recent times, however, a feeling seems to be growing among them that recriminations and fratricidal warfare have no meaning and need therefore be given up, especially when that very prize for which they are struggling is on the point of being snatched away by an upstart stranger. There has perhaps been no other creed in the world that is more aggressively missionary in spirit and more uncompromising in its claim for universality than the religion of Christ as preached by the churches of the West. But strange as it may appear, Christian missionaries of the world assembled in an International Conference at Jerusalem declared the other day that the present day struggle between faith and infidelity is not a struggle of one religion against another but between religion as a whole, on the one hand, and the non-religious attitude towards life, on the other. And a Christian speaker remarked recently, "If we are Christians, it is claimed, it is not Hinduism or Islam that we are fighting against; nor Hinduism and Christianity that we should combat if we are Mussulmans. Rather, below our differences as religious folk, there is a deeper unity; and the great struggle of our life is one in which men of every religion, Hindus, Muslims, Parsees, Christians, stand shoulder to shoulder against a common foe." And this foe may be conveniently named "secularism."

Now, what is this secularism? It is the non-spiritual attitude towards life

that has been advanced by the brilliant thinkers of our time on the findings of the modern physical and mental sciences. Up till the present day, men with rare exceptions believed that they were responsible to a moral agent for all their activities in life, and that the short span of man's existence on this terrestrial sphere was only a partial and imperfect revelation in space and time of the infinite potentialities of the soul. These two beliefs, that man is a spirit that survives the body and that the world has a moral background, are the two solid facts that determine the emotional attitude of man towards the cosmos in the spiritual scheme of life. Secularism implies the abandoning of these beliefs and the substitution of other articles of faith accompanied by correspondingly different emotional reactions towards the totality of life's environments.

The new articles of faith are based on the naturalistic conception of the universe and the bestial view of human nature provided by science and psychology respectively, as a result of their probings into the mystery of the universe and the personality of man. Science depicts a universe of inconceivably gigantic proportions operated by mechanical laws that run their relentless course without heeding to the prayers of men. In this naturalistic universe, having a diameter equal to the distance travelled by a ray of light in 300,000 light years, our sun, not to speak of our earth, is but a tiny speck that exists for a brief period and then disappears. According to the hypothesis of science, as yet however unverified, the ninety or more elements of the universe combine according to

the law of their own being, and some of these combinations gaining greater and greater complexity of form under the influence of temperature, light and pressure of other compounds, combine into atoms and molecules that take unto themselves other atoms and molecules, and become capable of reproducing themselves. This, it is said, is what we call life. While the origin of life is still crowded in mystery, science is, however, certain that its evolution is a record of wanton destruction and heartless cruelty that go against the idea of a moral order of the universe. The story of evolution reveals that Nature is red-toothed and red-clawed, and that the laws which govern this process, though they cannot be strictly described as mechanical, are none the less quite *natural*, showing no evidence of any divine agency behind. Whether it be in the evolution of the cosmos or in the evolution of life, science could but see the workings of mechanical principles and the laws of heartless strife and struggle.

The conclusions of science regarding the nature of the external world are being supplemented by physiology and psychology through the analysis of the human body and mind. Mechanistic biology regards consciousness as a 'mysterious' accompaniment of physical phenomena. It believes that all the activities of the mind can be explained in terms of physical and chemical processes occurring within the body, and that the hypothesis of an immortal soul need not at all be assumed for explaining the phenomena of consciousness. Psychology, however, views the human mind from a different stand-point, but arrives at conclusions that are not in any way more creditable to human nature. The story of evolution has shown that man has evolved from an animal ancestry, and psychology goes,

as it were, to confirm this by an analysis of the human mind. It divides the mind into two realms, the conscious and the unconscious—the conscious consisting of the impressions acquired in one's own life and forming the surface of the mind, and the unconscious of the deep-rooted, primordial tendencies that have come down to us by inheritance from a long line of ancestors. According to Sigmund Freud, the unconscious which forms the basis of human nature is a mass of sexual desire, and he interprets human behaviour as a manifestation of bestiality. What natural science seeks to do from outside, Freudian psychology seeks to do from inside. It also offers its own explanation of spiritual experience in terms of sex-hunger, of projection and of regression. It regards religion as an illusion and the spiritual view of life as an infantile attitude that man adopted in the past, when he failed to grapple with the mystery of existence.

We do not propose to consider here how far the conclusions of the physical and mental sciences have in reality invalidated the hypothesis of the spiritual view of life. What is important for us in trying to understand the modern secularist outlook is that these sciences provide alternative assumptions for a new philosophy of life. The sciences themselves concern only with abstract truth and have no interest in any philosophy of life, but modern thinkers and literary men, who are not themselves directly concerned with science, find in them material that can be used for criticising the spiritual view of life and creating a new emotional attitude towards our environment. These assumptions are (1) that the world is based only on mechanical and natural laws having no moral susceptibilities or no moral agent to administer them, (2) that the human personality is a

non-moral whole, that has directly descended from an animal ancestry and has no dual strata consisting of an immaterial, undying and divine substratum, covered by gross and subtle vestments of impure matter that hide the glory and sublimity of the real man. These assumptions, it must be pointed out, have not in any way been proved conclusively by science. All that it can say is that it has not lighted on any principle other than mechanical laws behind the universe and that the levels to which psychology has yet dived could yield only filth and foul-smelling stuff. None the less, the data provided so far are regarded as sufficient by many thinkers of today to form a comprehensive philosophy of life as opposed to the spiritual view based on the conception of a moral Being behind the universe and an immortal soul at the back of the human personality.

These intellectual assumptions have produced two sets of reactions on the human mind, and the secularists of today may be divided on this basis into two groups. Both of them are at one in denying anything sinful in human conduct and in advocating the full development of personality without any regard for extra-mundane ends. But one type are egotists, who care as little for society as they do for another world, while the other pay regard for the well-being of society, although they too advocate the fulfilment of desire as a supreme end in view. A typical representative of the egotist type is the well-known French writer Andre Gide. To him, the object of life is to behave naturally, without being deformed by conventions, and to develop the individuality by living according to inclinations. He regards that human nature is good as well as bad, but his bad and good lose their distinctions in so far as the former is

not something to be avoided and the latter to be cultivated. For the way to fulfilment lies through sin and suffering, and not through righteousness, and Gide accordingly calls, not the sinners but the righteous to repentance. "Life is an art. The art consists in living well, thoroughly, what is in us, good and bad, according to instant.....Live spontaneously, yield rather than struggle against.....and trust the future instant that you have, through acting spontaneously, through committing both good and evil, acquire wisdom. Always go onward, go ever beyond".

A philosophy of this type bears its refutation on its very face. Thinkers who boast that they have been emancipated from the thralldom of religion, have condemned the religious outlook as leading to strife and hatred in this world, but a view like this, which may startle even the emancipated minds, indicates the limits to which man may be led by this new intellectual assumption. To live according to the instant is to live like an animal. How wisdom can at all be acquired by a life of this kind, is hard to understand. For experience can teach an individual the desirability of avoiding what is evil and selfish, only when the feeling that these are something to be avoided and overcome is already present in the mind, and yielding comes after the power of resistance has been tried to the utmost. Under such circumstances, experience may confer wisdom through repentance, but it is impossible to conceive how yielding without struggle can take an individual even by an inch beyond the line that separates brutishness from humanity. The adverse effect on society of such a self-regarding theory, which teaches men more to yield than to sacrifice, hardly needs mention in this connection.

The other type of secularists also bestows an equal emphasis on the fulfilment of desires and impulses, but does not disregard the welfare of society in the interests of this fulfilment, as the egotists seem to do. As examples of this type, we may take Bernard Shaw and Bertrand Russell. Mr. Shaw believes that mankind is not led by God and that there are no moral laws. What directs mankind is human will. We are not to believe in love, but life "as a tireless power which is continually driving onward and upward". His God is the human will, manifesting itself in creative evolution. He is a believer in developing personality, and the means for this, according to him, is to be 'spontaneous', and do 'what one naturally wants to do'. But nonetheless he believes in equality of income and a host of other social measures for the betterment of general life. According to Russell, right conduct is what conduces to certain desired ends. If the definition of right conduct is to make a wide appeal, the ends must be such as large sections of mankind desire. Bad desires are those 'which tend to thwart the desires of others, or more exactly those which thwart more desires than they assist'. He pleads that we must respect human nature, "because our impulses and desires are the stuff of which our happiness is to be made." Vitality, courage, sensitiveness and intelligence are, according to him, the qualities that make up an ideal character. In spite of his insistence on desires and impulses, he advocates the absolute self-surrender of the individual to the life of the universe. He says, "Thus the perfection of courage is to be found in the man of many interests, who feels his ego to be but a small part of the world, not through despising himself, but through valuing much that is not himself." He is vehe-

mently opposed to organised religion, because it is useful only for the "promotion of militarism, economic injustice, superstition, persecution and insanity".

It is only the second type of secularism, of which we have cited Shaw and Russell as the representatives, that stands as a serious rival to the spiritual view of life. It derives its strength from three sources, firstly from its alleged basis in science, which somehow has won the confidence of modern humanity, secondly from its catering to the weaknesses of men by exalting desires and impulses, and lastly from its teaching of abstract sympathy and love for all sentient beings and of passive submission to the whole universe. The first aspect is attractive to the intellectuals, the second to the vulgar masses, and the third to the noble-minded. It is this many-sided appeal of modern secularism that has gained such wide popularity for it. Those who seek to combat it have to take this fact into consideration.

If the message of modern secularists has got the above-mentioned points of advantage within itself, they are as nothing when compared to the support it receives from the misrepresentation of the spiritual view of life by organised religion which has hitherto been its sole custodian all over the world. The charges that Bertrand Russell has brought against it have to be largely admitted by all, however passionately they may cling to the spiritual ideal. The organised church and priesthood of most religions have invariably adopted an attitude of hostility to men of science, who labour to increase human knowledge by laying bare the secrets of Nature's workings and to promote human happiness in ways that go against the conceptions of traditional morality. In almost all

countries the churches and the priests have co-operated with the rich and tyrannical in keeping down the masses, so that in a country like Russia where the priest was the most efficient tool in the hands of the Czar, religion had gone so low in the estimation of the people that when they got the opportunity, they adopted the radical step of stamping it out and declaring war on God. What is more, under the sanction and support of religion, heinous crimes like murder, arson and plunder have been committed and ferocious wars and bloody persecutions been carried on to the utter misery of countless men. In our own country, who knows not of the incurable social disease of communal riots and the grave political problem of communalism, both examples of the mischief that may spring from the spiritual nationalism of organised faiths? The spiritual view of life has gone down in the estimation of men, chiefly because of the selfishness, cruelty and conservatism of organised religions, with which it has hitherto been associated. It is analogous to the low idea people in India have about the art of dancing, because in this country it used to be cultivated chiefly by women of bad reputation.

But the sins of orthodoxy cannot, however, impair the truths or negate the beneficial influence of the spiritual view of life. On the other hand, if we examine the history of mankind, we can perceive that its influence has percolated through all the barriers that priests and churches have placed in its way, and substantially helped in taming the wild instincts that impelled the heart of primitive man. The apostles of modern secularism are like little children who stand on a hill top without realising that the panoramic view they enjoy is wholly due to the height of the hill and not due to their

own stature. They forget that the ethical code which they accept or seek to enlarge is deeply rooted in the spiritual view of life which they repudiate so loudly. A Bertrand Russell could say today, in spite of his scepticism, "At the present moment, polished English gentlemen flog Africans so severely that they die after hours' unspeakable anguish. Even if these gentlemen were well educated, artistic, and admirable conversationists, I cannot admit that they are living a good life. Human nature imposes some limitation of sympathy but not such a degree as that. In a democratically minded society, only a maniac would behave in this way". He could say this because he is a product of a culture that has for generations heard the message of Jesus Christ declaring that all men are brothers in the eyes of a fatherly God. He does not, however, realise that he speaks so, and his view of good life with its slogans of love and knowledge appeals to a large section of mankind, because the humane teachings of the spiritual message have already paved the way for it. In the instincts and desires of natural man there is nothing that prompts him to sacrifice his self-interest for the sake of his fellow-men, or give up the benefits of present enjoyment for the possible advantage of generations yet to come. The law of Nature is "Each man for himself and the Devil take the hindmost." There is no place in it for pity, sympathy and abstract love. There is nothing in it to prevent the strong from treading over the body of their fellow-beings, if by so doing one may advance one's own interest. In fact the law of cut-throat competition is still the law that practically regulates the life of man, but if in any measure it has been counteracted or a feeling against its brutal principles is arising in civilised socie-

ties, it is undoubtedly due to the message of the small band of spiritual men that the world has hitherto produced.

In a world that is unfamiliar with spiritual values we cannot conceive how there can be any guiding principle other than the exaltation of might. The establishment of the social order which is in a greater measure based on universal love and sympathy can never come into existence if its basis, the little altruism that exists in the world today, is destroyed. By its destruction humanity will only retrograde towards its primitive life of desires and impulses.

There are three vital urges in man—the urge for food, the sexual urge and the urge for the supernatural. The first two he shares with the lower animals for the purpose of self-preservation and race preservation, but the third is his unique privilege which perhaps accounts for the vast difference between him and brute creations. The search after the supernatural sprang from his desire for freedom from the terrible oppression of Nature's uncontrolled forces and the equally uncontrolled will and impulse of fellow-men. Both science and the spiritual quest are the bifurcations of the human mind engaged in this search. In early times they were both blended together, for both had the common purpose of overcoming the same adverse environment. But as human thought progressed, science took to the investigation of gross Nature with a view to subjugate its wild forces to the needs of life, while the mystics and the philosophers of the world worked for devising an attitude towards life which could transform the individual subjectively and teach him to view the sum total of reality in a light different from what it appears to the senses of animal man. Freudian psychologists may describe

this attitude as an illusion or a wish-fulfilment, meaning thereby that its conception of ultimate reality is devoid of any truth and is only an infantile adaptation to the environment that man cannot control. The sole reason for this conclusion seems to be that this conception of ultimate reality fulfils certain needs of man, but we do not however understand how the mere fact that it satisfies certain needs can detract from its truth.

In spite of this view of Freud one can make bold to say that humanity needs the spiritual view today more than at any other time. The great problem of the day is this: Man's attempt to conquer Nature through science has been a tremendous success and today he finds himself in possession of infinite resources which he could utilise either for collective welfare or for wholesale destruction. But the taming and the controlling of the wild forces within the mind of man have not proportionately progressed, and he is consequently more disposed to use his powers for selfish advantages than for the good of all. In other words, of Bertrand Russell's two principles of life, love and knowledge, the latter has progressed while the former has not proportionately increased. Secularists of the type of Russell and Freud are conscious of this, and in their scheme for the reorganisation of humanity they pay the greatest importance to a system of education calculated to transform human nature. But with a perversity that one fails to understand and a bias derived from their incapacity to disentangle the spiritual message from the acts and pretensions of priests and organised churches, they fail to recognise that by harping on instincts and desires, upon spontaneity and living for instant, they can no more improve

man than the warrior priests and national spiritualists of organised religions were able to do in the past. Russell's ideal of education aims at developing vitality, courage, sensitiveness and intelligence, but are they the only qualities required for the good life, which is a harmony of love and knowledge? How can sensitiveness or love become effective in the mind of the general mass of men, especially when faced with a situation demanding self-sacrifice, unless they receive inspiration from an ideal that touches the fundamental aspects of their personality? And what is there more fundamental in man than the urge which drives him to seek fulfilment in the Supreme Being?

No, the secularists' scheme to bring about the millennium by waging war on God is as much a chimera as that of the fanatical priest who finds the solution of the world's problems in the suppression of all free thinking. Modern man finds it hard to choose between the free thinker and the dogmatist, and there is utter confusion in his mind regarding spiritual values. What we want today is a universal church that falls not into the mistakes of the old organised religions—their hatred of knowledge, their imperviousness to new ideas, their incapacity to understand the standpoints of minds at different stages of evolution, their fanaticism in thought, word and deed, their vulgar view of proselytising and their tendency to divide humanity into hostile groups in the name of God. It must overcome the antipathy that at present seems to exist between virtue and brains, between science and spirituality, between faith and freedom of conscience, between individual sal-

vation and social upliftment, and must once for all discard the old priestly tactic of opposing, in the name of religion, all new measures and ideas calculated to improve the welfare of man in this world. It must be capable of producing the happy combination of love and knowledge, the same ideal of good life as Bertrand Russell holds, but which a purely secular scheme of education is incapable of producing. Therefore, the universal spiritual message humanity requires today must teach men not only to be pure, holy, self controlled and loving, like a Christ or a Buddha, but also to acquire that dispassionate devotion to Truth characteristic of the scientist and described by Bacon in the following words: "For myself I found that I was fitted for nothing so well as a study of Truth; as having a mind nimble and versatile enough to catch the resemblance of things (which is the chief point) and at the same time steady enough to distinguish their subtle differences; as being gifted by nature with desire to seek, patience to doubt, slowness to assert, readiness to reconsider, carefulness to dispose and set in order; and as being a man that neither affects what is new nor admires what is old, and that hates every kind of impostor....." Secularism may be audacious in claiming to be a substitute for spiritual values; but secularism has a vital message to deliver to humanity, and until spiritual men have absorbed that message and corrected their hostile attitude towards reason and secular aspirations of mankind, it shall not cease to sing its stirring song of revolt and receive an appreciative hoarding from among the masses as well as the cultured.

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## ETHICS OF THE UPANISHADS

By Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar, M. A. Ph. D.

(Continued from the last issue)

### *The Moral and the A-moral*

THE Upanishads, indeed, establish no such conception of moral personality and moral progress. Such morality is strictly possible in the life of concentration where the law of contrariety rules; but none can conceive such a contrariety in the Absolute which is beyond all expression, beyond all self-alienation. The One is impersonal and therefore the one is beyond all conception of progress and personality. Morality is strictly a virtue that obtains in the world of contrariety and values, but certainly not in the Impersonal Absolute. The Upanishads do not deny the creative ideals of life, the life's urges and the life's purpose. But the Upanishads are more alive to the truth that creative urges are cosmic and subserve a cosmic purpose or end. And even then, the creative activity is more spontaneous than volitional. The ethical end is true to the person but the cosmic end is reached when the sense of the person is transcended and the spontaneous creative flow of life becomes vividly apparent before the seeker. The moment the cosmic sense is realised the usual idea of moral life is set aside. Life in its a-moral aspect becomes clear and apparent. The cosmic life transcends the conflicts of moral life, and viewed from this point the impellings and urges of life appear in a new colour. Life becomes more than personality, and the stream of life in its perpetuity is felt to be unceasingly creative of beauties, holiness, symmetry and harmony, but life itself transcends them

in its own being. These are indeed ideals divinely inspired, but is not divinity a set-up ideal in the free flow of life? Life is a-moral and a-logical—it can create these values in the course of becoming, but it passes beyond them. It is indifferent to what it creates, for creation is limitation, it is a restraint, it is, as it were, a reflex course in the free flow of life. But life is unceasing. It is ever-creative, though it ever transcends creation.

Understood in this sense, the Upanishads certainly set up the a-moral standard of life and expression, and because of this, they see the value in the release of life from the restrictions of ethics and in the fullness of expression. And this attitude has allowed a higher vision and a better adaptation.

Every form and mode of expression gets a new meaning. It is read as a wave in the cosmic life. The finite purpose and setting are lost in the infinite purpose and cosmic setting. Our instinctive move and action are no longer set aside as positively injurious, harmful and baneful to a moral and religious growth—they are looked upon as serving cosmic purpose and ends. A new joy, a new sense of freedom and freshness—the true resurrection in the continual renewal of life—is held up before us. The fettered sense of a limited life living through conflicts and struggles is replaced by the free sense of a re-creating life. The creative ideal and force are unceasing and cosmic; they have no particular values though values are set upon them. The insistence upon value delimits what is unlimited.

Value is eventually a humanistic ideal. It sees a section of the infinite life bounded up in certain relations with certain meanings. But it loses the zest of life. It fails to appreciate its fluidity, its cosmic stirrings, its perpetuity and evenness—its rejuvenation, its perpetual renewal.

The Upanishads have then shown due regard to the duties and activities of the different stations of life as well as emphasised the transcendence of life and spirit. In this blessed union of moral realism and idealism lies their real value as gospels of life. They are alive to the value and importance of every move, to every form of insistence in the economy of life, and at the same time they seem anxious to find out their cosmic importance. A healthy detachment as well as a helpful enjoyment have been combined in the concrete life of seeking. The duties are different in the situations of life, but the mainspring of adaptation has been a detached enjoyment. The attitude of detachment which keeps up the spirit of self-consciousness can evaluate properly the different ends of life, can read and find out their meaning and purpose in cosmic sense and guide their adaptation and adjustment properly. The seeker develops in him intuitions (moral) which appraise the values of the different lines of conduct, their place in the adaptation of life, and their influence upon the final ideal of Truth.

The spirit of detachment keeps up the freshness of life and leads on to final transcendence. Life's beauties and dignities are enjoyed more in detachment than in seeking—for detachment effects a release from the values of immediate ends and keeps up the self-consciousness in its even continuity. The self-conscious gratification takes away the sting from it. It can no

longer blind us to its pleasures and attractions. Detachment enables us to find the inner meanings of Nature's urges and to reveal their cosmic values. And hence it finally helps us to read the new meaning in the release of Nature's forces.

In this sense duty shines with a new light, with a new purpose. It has not been sacrificed or neglected. Celibacy and married life, active life and life of complete silence have found a place in the adjustment of life, for every one of them is the expression of life either in preparation or in service, in contemplation or in wisdom. There is no conflict, for each has a place at a proper time, each comes out of an imperative demand of life. Life is not to be sacrificed. It cannot be sacrificed. Its fine oscillations are to be felt, and its completeness is to be enjoyed.

#### (4) *The Four Stages of Life*

In the adaptation of everyday life the final end has not been lost sight of. There is the inner urge in life to dispense with limitation, to live more fully, more intensively. But this full and intensive living cannot be possible unless there is constant conscious detachment from finite ends of life. Life teaches this detachment. Life cannot grow in confinement. It flows freely, it flows eternally.

Hence the different stages are to be understood as different phases in the expression of life. The life of preparation has its joy, as well as the life of service. Service presupposes preparation. And therefore the life of preparation finds its natural fruition in the life of service. If life of preparation implies a discipline and constraint, it has its fine satisfaction when it can give itself up freely for the higher calling of service. Life of service in the second stage is a life of equilibrium and

balance between sacrifice and gratification, between self-giving and self-assertion. And naturally so, for reason and Nature assert themselves fully, and in nature's gratification is found the release of Nature's forces. Reason sanctions this gratification. And reason keeps up the even detachment.

The householder is taught to look upon the urges of life in a spirit of detachment. This detachment cannot be complete in his case in the sense of a complete cessation of all vital demands, but even in vital adaptation, the Upanishads give the distinct imperative of calling up the cosmic urges, and in this sense the householder's life has been called a *Yajna*, a sacrifice, necessary to make the life and the adaptation elastic (*Vide Chhandogya*). 'Life's calling has not been disparaged, and unnecessary and unnatural check has not been put upon them, though the instruction has been definite to establish the cosmic tune in the soul even in these humble vocations of life. The texts have gone to characterise even the biological adaptations as sacrifices (*Vide Chhandogya*), for they are anxious to wake up the cosmic sense in details of life. Every move of life, each gush of breath, has been looked upon as the move of cosmic life, and when the cosmic sense has been established, the seeker gets freedom from the confined and limited vision.

Sacrifice and gratification are not opposed. They become complementary. Gratification is not looked upon as gratification, but as an outlet for sacrifice. The crude impelling is chastened by the touch of sacrifice. The ideal is always the cosmic life and the adaptation is cosmic. The cosmic sense is to be reared up through the common habits and adaptations of life, and therefore the ego-centric vision has to be dis-

placed by cosmo-centric insight. The cosmo-centric insight changes the meaning and value of adaptations in life where the gratifications are no longer supposed as gratifications, but are looked upon as forms of cosmic impelling adapted to cosmic ends. This cosmo-centric impulsion reads sacrifice in gratification, and adds a redeeming touch to the instinctive impellings and becomes the sure index of movement in higher mentality and spirituality.

The commonplace dictum of the rationalisation of impulses finds its acceptance in the Upanishads, where the vital gratifications are looked upon with a mental reserve and detachment, where the first impelling gets refined by the reinforcement from the fine move of life. Sacrifice is at the root of life in creation as well as in preservation, for creation implies self-alienation, preservation implies sacrifice: and rightly viewed, the gratification that follows them is the gratification not of enjoyment, but of sacrifice. When this sense dawns upon the habitual biopsychological adaptations, the crude natural processes touch the ethical level, and get sanctified in the economy of moral and spiritual life.

But humanity cannot be long confined to the biological adaptation, and the cosmic impelling which gets satisfaction through it cannot long afford to have its expression through the vital-physical plane. The cosmic impelling cannot long continue in its eccentric projection and is soon followed by a centric urge, by the contrary tendency of inner concentration.

The life of wanderer is a life of intense concentration and inner opening, and naturally the eccentric projection disturbing the equilibrium of the higher mentality and spirituality cannot be long welcome in the life of pre-

paration for final realisation. This inward bent is naturally a forsaking of the claims of the biological life, and is followed by continuous purification of the biological and animal being. The least biological touch agitates the instincts and disturbs the calm equanimity so much necessary for the finer penetration into the depth of being.

Hence to wake up fine possibilities it is necessary to evaluate properly the instinctive demands, not with a view to kill a part of being, but with a higher intuition to regularise the instinctive forces and transform them. The nature of man is divided unto itself, and this division cannot be set aside so long as there is no harmony between the benevolent and the malevolent forces, between the forces of light and darkness in man.

But from this it does not follow that the Upanishads have no insistence upon morality. The due importance of morality has not been denied. It has all along been urged as preparing the seeker for the higher pursuits of knowledge and Truth, and knowledge in the Upanishads has been not merely an intellectual grasping but an intuitivised realisation which is not possible in a system not fine enough to see through the veil. The Upanishads reveal a positive abhorrence for ignorance, for ignorance keeps away the light of Truth and creates in man the hankering after pleasures here and hereafter.

The Katha has drawn a distinction between the good and the pleasant. The wise choose the first, the unwise, the second. The pleasant and the transitory are the satisfaction that follows upon the performance of sacrificial rites. Hence the pursuit of the wise has been always for the enduring and the eternal.

The ethics of the Upanishads, therefore, is essentially a moral preparation to acquire the fit understanding to grasp this teaching, and a fit being to finally realise it.

Though the highest ideal has been Truth, still the Upanishads have shown the spirit of charity towards all the aspects and phases of life and have not insisted upon a rigid moral code to give us a chastened being and a pure self. The path of the pleasant has been distinguished from the path of the good but the pleasant aspect has not been always ignored, for all delight is the reflection of the delight supernal. In the move of life the ideal has not been forgotten, though it has been circumscribed through the stations of life and the duties pertaining to them. But the main pursuit has to be kept up. The Upanishads do not emphasise the cloistered virtues but have enjoined intense living of every moment of life. Even here the ideal has not been forgotten.

When the pleasant has been discarded, it is not because the pleasant has no place in life. The pleasant has a distinct and important place in life inasmuch as there is a seeking for the pleasant in our being. And, therefore, if there is the call to discard it, it follows from the deeper penetration into and understanding of life. If the pleasant demands all the attention, life cannot rise above the surface joys and delights and go deeper to see the face of Reality. The hedonistic joys and delights have this limitation that they keep our attention and purpose fixed in the egoistic consciousness and do not allow the higher self-opening and self-revelation. The pleasant tickles our lower mental being and is, therefore, an obstruction to deeper realisation and truer perception. If the happy truth that the pleasures of

life are the shadows and reflections of the higher delight of the Self dawns upon us, then a possibility arises of welcoming the delights of Self in place of the pleasures of life. A deeper understanding is the surest way of transcendence or transformation. But this does not suppose that our being should be rigid and stiff to enable us to welcome the higher delights of Self. Morality should develop plasticity of nature to give that fineness of intelligence and that poise of being which can see and appreciate the a-moral or the supra-moral expression of life. And our conduct is no longer dictated by a sense of constraint, and spirit is not highly strung by the sense of watchfulness and understanding. An artificial withdrawal and a forced suppression disturb the serenity of being. The Upanishads, therefore, do not dictate the same kind of adaptation for all. Those who are by nature fit for a moral idealism can at once withdraw from the delights of life and seek the higher delights of Self. The chastened being is indeed a necessity, but every one has not that fitness. For these the path of gratification and sacrifice, and sacrifice through gratification has been drawn. Anyhow the cosmocentric impulsion is to be established in life, if the direct transcendence of the impulses is not thought possible. Every constitution has not the same kind of instinctive urges. And in the life of knowledge the instinctive urges can have no free play and free vent, for the finer intuitions cannot develop in a being dominated by instincts. The constant solicitations from instincts do not allow the mind to run into finer experiences and develop finer intuitions. And, therefore, the strong instinctive urges naturally demand a satisfaction and expression before they can allow any freedom to

the Self. The extroverts then have been given the sanction to enjoy. But then this enjoyment has been "spiritualised" so to speak by the deeper understanding of instincts as cosmic urges subserving cosmic ends and purposes. This kind of understanding really transforms the instincts, and their crudeness is to a certain extent removed. In fact a kind of religiosity and spirituality is then found in them.

The ethics of the wanderer is essentially the adaptation to get a keen intelligence, a sound physique, a pure being and a wide sympathy. The moral discipline rears a fit physical frame to bear with dignity the stresses of physical adaptation, the abstention from food and drink gives a control over the crude demands of nature which disturb the tranquillity of meditation. The sacrifices and the Tapas (religious discipline) clarify the mental being and free it from the vital complexes. Charity fosters sympathy and saves the being from rigidity and stiffness. The wanderer wakes up from the dream of the pleasures and the securities of the earthly life, and therefore frees himself from the native attractions of the flesh. These are instinctive impellings normal to the human being and the aspirant after transcendence must get over the impellings to have the calm state of mind necessary to Truth-vision.

The ethics of Truth-vision is naturally different from the ethics of the waking up and adjustment of the inner powers and possibilities. By their very promise the Upanishads deny in the wanderer and the contemplative the ethics of activism, and in its place embrace that form of discipline necessary to final illumination and emancipation. The householder follows the path of *vita-activa*, the wanderer, of the *vita-contemplativa*. From the nature

of the case, the life in family and society has active callings, and presents an aspect of life in which conflicts of claims and counter-claims sometimes disturb the calm equanimity and tranquillity of being. But the freedom of the wanderer from these conflicts and their settlements can allow his mental being that relaxation which is necessary to contemplation. To put in modern terms, the wanderer's life is free from the compelling forces of civilisation and is devoted essentially to retirement. This retirement is sought as a blessed opportunity for meditation upon the finer phases of life to eventually understand and enjoy the fountain source of life. The householder generally enjoys the life and its complexities through family and society, the wanderer enjoys the musings of life in its free and unrestrained expression through the woods and the trees. The wider harmony of Nature streams into his relaxed being. The ethics of the active life is, therefore, different from the ethics of the contemplative life of the wanderer. Both seek and enjoy life and its expression. The one enjoys it in its varieties and complexities and in its concentration. The other enjoys it in its free and unrestrained expression in inward meditation and through Nature. The one enjoys the active joys of life, the other the sleeping delights in Nature and in soul.

But there is essentially no conflict between the different phases and stations of life. The one stage makes us fit for the next. Life blossoms through these stages of expression. In the process of unfoldment every stage is important, for they all exhibit life's cadence, rhythm and beauty. Each stage makes a definite advance in the process of unfoldment. The conflict is really no conflict, so

long as life moves on through successive stages. The student life cultivates Dharma, as Chhandogya points out, and this Dharma is manifold—performance of sacrifice, preparation of texts, and cultivation of charity. Even the discipline of the inner control, the withdrawal of the mind, etc, is practised in the student life, as preparation for further life of search and greater responsibility. The householder's life represents the second stage in the process of development. (And, therefore, the Texts which plead for a conciliation between sacrifices and gratification *e.g.* Isa should be read as strictly enjoining a precept for the householder.)

In the life of the wanderer the balance of life in sacrifice and gratification has been sought to be displaced by the complete spiritualisation of the vital forces by bringing them under the control of the higher mentality and spirituality. The Upanishads hold that the finest spiritual life is not possible with these forces active in us, for the natural aspiration in spiritual life is to go to the depths where the demands of the lower self can have no play. The spiritual life is a life of freedom in expanse, beyond the urges of divided life; and hence in the spiritual height nothing can cling to the self which disturbs its harmony.

A life of complete detachment from the native impellings towards satisfaction, biological and physical, has been enjoined upon and a form of rigourism is thus prescribed for the aspirant, but the reward which follows compensates the discipline. The spiritual urges overpower the seeker and draw him more and more on the path by the ever-widening life and over-absorbing delight.

Truly speaking it is not rigourism, for there is no tension in mental being to follow the path of detachment. Detach-

ment has its own joy, the joy of serenity and fine psychism. Spiritual shortsightedness identifies spiritual life and its discipline with rigourism and stiffness. Spiritual life, even in its preparation, has a flood of unique joy to pour upon the seeker, for it really exhibits life in its fineness and freshness. True spirituality promises joy in the beginning and joy in the end. It fosters fine sensibility which cannot remain satisfied with the crude delight of blind instincts. Hence in the case of the fit, even the least strain is not felt in spiritual life, for the whole being becomes attuned to the rhythm of spirit. The self-dividedness and the conflict between the higher and the lower selves which is really painful dissolves before the harmony of life. The more the life becomes spiritualised, the greater is the harmony between all the parts of being, and life becomes, as it were, a piece of poetry, symmetrical in parts and metrical in texture.

The spiritual possibilities are enjoyed not only in the transcendent, but also in the initiation of spiritual life, for so potential is spirituality that its distinctiveness and possibilities cannot be

long missed when the seeker has the earnest quest. The spiritual life stands marked by its offering a more receptive being because of its intrinsic purity.

This purity, the foundation of spiritual life, is no cant; it is the essential condition for finer penetration. It is the purity of the higher and the lower mind, purity in flesh and spirit. Inward purity is not consistent with outward impurity, and therefore the text enjoins discipline for the inner as well as for the physical being. The true seeker, as the Katha enjoins, must have an attentive and intelligent understanding and a pure and clean body (I, iii. 8).

This high demand at once requires a novel adjustment in life, a new bent on life's path. This consists in an all-round sacrifice, a sacrifice which touches the inner fountain of life and changes its wonted course and native impelling.

The least outward impelling disturbs the calm, destroys the clarity necessary for realisation. Purity of being gives rise to subtle perception and fosters transcendent insight.

*(To be continued)*

## SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA, SANNYASIN AND TEACHER

*By Sister Devamata*

### II

**W**ITH the great majority who take up the religious life renunciation is a reiterated process. They drop the world and pick it up again, again drop it, until renouncing, by force of increasing repetition, becomes a daily act and a

daily struggle. The reason of this is, they do not renounce that in themselves that ties them to the world. This was pre-eminently untrue of Swami Ramakrishnananda. He made one sweeping act of renunciation and all the cords that bound him to family, social relations, pride of caste, ambition

and desire for name and fame, hung loose and severed. He cut the innermost cord. He renounced himself. His detachment was complete. I saw him meet disappointment, criticism, condemnation, antagonism, waxing and waning of his work, even loss by death, with a smile on his face. He would sit cross-legged on a rug near the north door of the monastery hall in the earlier Math at Mylapore; his powerful body bare to the waist—as was the custom under the burning skies of Madras—one hand holding his foot, and rocking gently back and forth with rhythmic regularity,—thus he would sit and tell me quite casually of some blow that had been struck at his calm and his courage.

He was not unfeeling. "If we cannot love others, if we cannot serve others, what are we here for?" were the frequent words on his lips. His heart was large and generous, overflowing with dispassionate love; but he was a Sannyasin, one who had renounced; and that meant he must be even-minded in praise and blame, honour and dishonour, victory and defeat. "When a man is vilified, yet shows no resentment or even annoyance," he said one day, "you may be sure he has conquered his ego and is completely detached."

It must not be imagined, however, that Swami Ramakrishnananda possessed a placid personality. He was too powerful, too positive in his reactions, to be placid. Placidity is passive, negative, the absence of disturbance, not the result of a struggle lived out. True serenity, on the contrary is the fruit of storm. It is the quiet of the harbour after riding the gale. It contains a depth, a latent force, which could spring from nothing less. All great souls who labour for humanity are storm-swept at times. Christ drove

the money-changers before His wrath. He dealt scorching rebuke to the Pharisees. Swami Ramakrishnananda too had his moments of righteous indignation. The cause never lay in himself. Any attack or hostility directed against him left him unmoved. It was disloyalty to the Ideal, negligence or carelessness in the Lord's Service, disrespect toward that which was sacred and holy, hypocrisy, insincerity—these were the things that roused him as they did the prophets of old.

The Swami rarely discussed worldly affairs. He did not read the newspapers. To the lay mind he might have seemed lacking in human interest, but in reality he was keenly concerned for his fellow-men. He believed however that true interest consisted not in remaining human with them, but in helping them become Divine. "Those who give up the world for the spiritual life are giving up the uncertain for the certain, the passing for the permanent," he reiterated. It was inevitable from this attitude of mind that he should dwell with great insistence on the value of renunciation. "All our power comes from renunciation," he declared again and again. "Only when we have given up our life, do we begin to live. At present we are like prisoners. We may get a glimpse of freedom now and then but the world falls upon us when we are off our guard, and drags us back once more into our prison cell. As soon as a man finds out, however, that these little pleasures of the flesh are nothing compared with the infinite pleasures of the spirit, he wants to renounce; not for the sake of renunciation, but because he has found something better. He has realised the hollowness of the enjoyments of the world and can be satisfied only with higher enjoyment. Renunciation

means giving up a lesser thing for a greater."

I saw Swami Ramakrishnananda very seldom during the heated hours of the day; but when the evening coolness began to fall, tempering the sun-scorch of midday, I would go across to the monastery, accomplish the simple duties I was allotted there, and assist at Arati. Then I would take my place on the rug near the Swami in the monastery hall and listen—listen so intently that I was able to go home and write down later all that I had heard. Sometimes others were present, sometimes we were alone, but always the Swami talked with the same ardour of feeling. On one evening that is vivid in my memory, he spoke at length of the illusive spell which the world casts over us: "As long as there is intense struggle," he said, "there are still desires which tie us to the world. We have not realised yet its complete hollowness. When we realise that, the way is easy. The world is a place where the unreal appears to be real and the real appears unreal. *Maya* makes us believe something to be where there is nothing, and nothing to be where there is something. It makes weakness seem all-powerful and the powerful seem weak. The poor sage in the forest, whose loin cloth is of bark and whose bed is the bare ground, appears to the world as a weakling; while the king on his throne in a glittering palace appears to it strong; but in reality it is the sage that is powerful. Compared to him the king on his throne is nothing. Recognising this, kings in ancient times, when a sage came to their court, would come down from their throne and prostrate in the dust before him."

"The charm of *Maya* is so irresistible, it is only when God is gracious to

us that we can lift the veil and get a little glimpse of Him. All *Maya* is localised in ego. Pull out the foundation and the whole house will collapse. Take away the ego and the whole structure of *Maya* will fall. Then you will realise a state of perfect calmness. *Maya* traps us through the senses. He who has conquered his senses has conquered the whole universe."

"If a man should see God, what would he ask for?" Sri Ramakrishna, the Master, said once. "Houses and lands? No: God-vision. Nothing less would seem worthwhile." So was it with Swami Ramakrishnananda. He had no quarrel with the world. He recognised its charm and beauty, but he knew that that charm was ephemeral, that beauty fleeting; while beneath them lay hidden the unchanging and everlasting. "Seek that and that only," was his constant cry. "Do not be content with the little finite things of this world. Do not be satisfied with anything short of infinite. Let your ambition be infinity. Give up because you know that what you throw away is perishable, what you gain is imperishable and eternal. The more you can fix your mind on God and forget yourself, the more quickly will this be done." These words strike the keynote of the Swami's teachings. They were a continuous call to infinitude.

As it was through our desires that the world held us captive, he waged relentless war against the tyranny of desire. "It is not easy," he said one evening as we talked together, "to free the mind of desires. God alone can do it. A man who has no idea of God will never get rid of desires. He will say: 'If I have no desire what difference will there be between me and the wall? It is desire alone that gives me enjoyment. For every desire there

is satisfaction in the world. Why, then, should I give up desire? The man who has devotion for God, however, sees that instead of bringing enjoyment, these desires are the source of all his unhappiness. He realises that

in God alone can he find satisfaction for all desires. God is infinite bliss and all other happiness is finite and perishable. Hence nowhere but in Him can true happiness be found, a happiness that has no break."

## SANKARA AND VEDANTA

*By Prof. Ernest P. Horowitz*

**A**GE after age, new stacks have been added to Sankara's immortal commentary by sages who cognized things of the spirit, and dared live the truth they knew, regardless of the world's cheap sneers or praises. Creedless, yet benevolent to every creed, not entering into competition with the world's religions, but supplying a common base for all, Vedanta seems pre-eminently fit to function as a kind of international arbitration court between conflicting sects, to settle theological disputes without fear or favour. Every denomination within every faith is inclined to raise the war cry: my creed alone is true, only my saviour is divine! But Vedanta, world-wide in its sympathies, points to the one divine life which is profusely manifest in all of God's messengers. They are sent, from age to age, into the soul-sick world to heal disease, and redeem those in bondage. Mankind constantly relapses into error, and ever needs salvation. Moses and Mohammed, Buddha and Jesus, fulfilled the same charitable mission of reclaiming erring mortals from gloom to light. Like ships furrowing the sea, these godmen left behind them a long and luminous trail which the restless waves of Maya or cosmic nescience, time and again, effaced and obliterated. The law of Nature is inbred delusion and darkness broken by an occasional

streak of light. Vedanta focuses the spiritual effulgence of all creeds, great and small, from the dim instinct of savage souls to the radiant gospel light. The world's religions are sober and practical guides along life's tortuous path of sin and error; Vedanta champions all creeds.

Sankara, the classical exponent of Vedanta, recognises unity beneath variety, and gradual expansion of personal interests into a world-wide fellow-feeling. Family, city, nation, race, all manners of companionship, are so many steps on the way. Vedanta merges individuality into the infinite; the narrow current of love for home and country broadens out, until the heart flows over with sweet compassion for suffering humanity, and finally loses itself in the boundless ocean of divine pity. In order to account for the multiplicity of phenomena presented to the exterior senses, Sankara assumes one basic principle, and not two or more; he is a non-dualist. Physical science affirms the interdependence of cosmic force and matter. Monotheists acknowledge a Creator outside creation; pantheists object to anything extra-cosmic, and believe that God is indwelling in everything. But all this is dualism. Sankara's monistic claim rests on the assumption that Nature is in God, a transient shadow cast by Deity,

a wavering image of Him in whom all things have their prenatal germ and final resting-place.

Sankara is utterly opposed to dull-witted materialism which identifies ultimate perfection with Nature's in-born corruption and limitations. He is also equally antagonistic to the narrow conception that mental energy, moral force and spiritual power, are but vibrations of indestructible matter. Doomed is that person or nation that worships base matter, and dances round the golden calf. What more can the almighty dollar purchase than economic comfort and luxury? As a rule, the neglected education of millionaires benefits little from foreign travel. They are generally pampered and self-engrossed; too much money burdens the mind quite as heavily as utter poverty. The best things pertain to heart and soul and spirit; they are free gifts, and to be had for nothing. A material civilization without the background of artistic culture and religious ideals will collapse like a dwelling-house built on shifting, drifting sand.

All life is of God, Sankara teaches. The body is of flesh, but the soul is of God, and regenerate souls are one in Him. Moonbeams tremble in the silver-flooded hedge; they are actual enough, yet have no reality apart from the moon. They cannot shine unless the moon shines. Each individual, born anew by the spirit's sanctifying touch, is a ray of Universal Soul, an outflow and reflection of the divine; a likeness of celestial glory, seen in a mirror darkly.

A heart renewed,  
And full of love divine,  
Simple and pure and true and good.  
A copy, Lord, of Thine!

Our true nature is divine. However dense the veil of selfishness, however thick the fumes of passion are, which

stifle the heavenly flame, they cannot quench, though they repress, the mystic fire which burns low or bright in every heart. Light is complete in itself, and does not depend on darkness, although it is more conspicuous in the dark. But darkness may be changed to light. Each selfish impulse and indulgent act shuts out some of God's light, and adds another weight to the heavy chain which binds man to the prison-house of flesh.

The psychological current of Sankhya-yoga which flowed into the new theology is broad and deep, but the spiritual torrents of Vedanta are more rapid and translucent. In their fearless rush after truth they hurl the soul along, heedless of earthly obstacles which might impede progress. Is Vedanta older than Sankhya? The idle question has been hotly contested, and the answer is simple enough. Unsystematised Sankhya, the venerable source of Buddhist psychology, precedes and antedates Sankara's harvest of Indian wisdom. But his imperishable Sanskrit commentary, which deserves a place of honour by the side of Plato's Dialogues and Kant's Critiques, is chronologically anterior to the coherent texts of the Sankhya School.

Heaven and hell are watchwords of the Christian church; being and non-being, Sat and Asat, are the keynote and catchword of Vedanta. Even such exquisite qualities as omniscience, omnipotence and perfect goodness, seem inadequate to Brahman or God, unworthy of Deity which is infinite rather than personal. Knowledge and love presuppose objects to be known and loved. To connect finite objects with the infinite shows crude reasoning. A Creator, conscious of the creation and blessing his creatures, implies a qualification of the unquali-

fied which is pure Being (Sat), absolute consciousness (Chit) and perfect bliss (Ananda). Sat-chit-ananda is no qualification, but the very essence of Brahman in the Vedanta philosophy. Human happiness, knowledge and existence, compared to Satchidananda, are mere dreams and passing shadows. Fish in the sea, birds in the air, angels and men, all things created, breathe in Thee! Not transitory life, relative thought and earthly bliss, is Thy triune name, O Father (Pitar) of Light (Dyau), but transcendent life, pure reason and absolute blessedness!

Does the student of Indian literature remember Satyakama, the truthful boy, and Sati the faithful wife? <sup>1</sup> The neuter form of Sati is Sat which means "the True" or quite literally, "what is". Truth "is" in sooth! Untruth is non-existent, a mere vapour and delusion of an overheated or distorted brain. Sat is the Ever-present, but Asat is absent from a noble soul. Falsehood and naughtiness are Asat. In the beginning rose desire, the primal germ and seed of organic life; sages who search their heart discover Sat hid in Asat. Ramakrishna named the most gifted of his spiritual sons "Vivekananda" which signifies, blessed through 'discrimination' (Viveka); the young Sannyasi was able to discern between reality and appearance, Sat and Asat, substance and semblance.

The transient world as it appears to the five senses is Asat, but changeless reality, the divine essence of every individual, is Sat. The senses can only cognize Asat or outward phenomena which are bound by space and time and obey the law of evolution and causality. What bud, bee, babe

really are, the senses never know. Earth life with its keen joys and sorrows is Asat. We are Asat, imperfect. The Perfect is beyond time and change. We evolve, and have reached various stages of growth. And it is because we are more or less advanced, none equally gifted, that so different views of life are taken. A painter's eye sees finer shades, a musician's ear detects subtler tones, a poet's radiant fancy is more alert and intuitive, a philosophic mind is clearer about the nature and reason of things than ordinary mortals are. Some people seem to have lost all sense of harmony and colour which beautify Nature. Others lack tact, or brain, or, worse still, are heartless. Yet, there is unity behind all the variety of gifts and deficiencies. There is concord above the clash of endless opinions. Great souls, indeed, have overcome their rebellious nature and step by step have risen to the heights of Sat, the Christ-plane, where all differences melt in Oneness of vision. But all who love the life of the senses are held in bondage by Asat. He who loves his life shall lose it, but those who loathe it shall keep it unto life eternal. Alas! We love our chains, they tinkle sweetly. We have grown fond of the gilded prison bars, like caged birds that never felt the wild thrill and throb of freedom.

Such is the teaching about Sat. It is Aryan wisdom, worked out independently in India, Greece and Germany, the three headquarters of the world's metaphysics. Vedanta, Plato and Kant have reached the same conclusion almost in identical terms.

The test of true success is discernment between what is accidental and essential. Reality, unmanifest and absolute, is beyond the reach of the senses, and passes human understanding. Reality is our very self, the

1. See the author's Short History of Indian Literature.

soul of our soul. Learning alone cannot teach it, mere scholars do not know it, but the pure in heart know Sat; Hridayena Janati Satyam : through the heart a man knows Truth! (Great Jungle Upanishad 9. 23).

## DESIRE AND ITS CONTROL

*By Swami Pranaveshananda*

**I**N the Katha Upanishad it is stated, "God has rendered the senses so defective that they go outward, hence man sees the external objects and not the internal Self. Some wise man desirous of Immortality turns his eyes in and beholds the inner Atman."

It is no wonder, then, that man with his senses always going outwards comes in contact with the objects of the senses and thinks, or rather is led to think, of them constantly. Thus a longing for possessing them is established in his mind and he forthwith exerts himself to get them, as he thinks he could derive happiness from those objects. The natural tendency of man is to seek happiness in external objects. He knows no better. He is so charmed with the pleasurable aspect of the sense objects, that he does not or cannot see their painful effect in the beginning. This exertion to possess the objects arouses in him a certain amount of Rajas, i.e., activity, and puts him to ceaseless efforts. He goes on desiring one object after another,—one fulfilled another is craved for, that satisfied yet another and so on. There is no end of his desires, as there is no limit to the objects of the senses outside. Modern science has enabled man to explore newer and newer avenues for worldly enjoyments and physical comforts.

Although desires are infinite, the scope for fulfilment is limited, as man with a limited energy at his disposal cannot satisfy all the desires of his

mind in one short span of life. But a desire once raised in the mind does not die without producing its effect. The mind-stuff is a great store-house of all these desires reduced to impressions or Samskaras, and when the body and the senses are worn out by the active pursuit after the fulfilment of these desires, the body falls and the soul within attains a new body suitable for the enjoyment of desires which loom large before its mind's eye at the time of its departure from the present body. Bhagavan Sri Krishna says in the Gita: "Remembering whatever object at the end, he (man) leaves the body, that alone is reached by him, O son of Kunti, (because) of his constant thought of that object." Supposing the soul thinks of animal desires it must take an animal body, i.e., a body suitable for the satisfaction of its animal desires. Intellectual pursuits beget a man's body and spiritual contemplation, a god's body. But if the mind-stuff is made up of all these impressions and the soul gets an animal body, only the animal desires will be fulfilled and the other desires must wait till suitable environments arise.

Thus the soul is caught in this network of Maya—of births and deaths in eternal succession. But man cannot go on with this sort of life for ever, for after all he is endowed with reason and by his bitter experience finds he out that 'desire is never satisfied by the enjoyment of desire, that it only increases the more, as fire when ghee is poured

upon it.' This is true not only of sense enjoyments, but also of mental and intellectual enjoyments,—in fact of all the enjoyments of which the human mind is capable. Unsatisfied desires put man out of gear, anger grows and leaves him deluded, and this again benumbs his intellect causing him to lose his power of discrimination between the real and the unreal.

Is there then no way out of this Maya, this unappeasable fire of desire, the eternal foe of man dragging him from birth to birth, death to death? Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna used to say that so long as the seeds of desire are not burnt in man he cannot escape from this eternal round of births and deaths. The potter keeps in his courtyard both baked and unbaked earthen pots. A cow trampling upon them breaks them to pieces, but the potter throwing away the baked pot pieces reserves the unbaked ones to form them into fresh vessels. Similarly the Creator has no use for those who have burnt their desires. They are like baked pots. Therefore it has been taught by all teachers to those who wish to free themselves from the bondage of birth and death, "Desire nothing, give up all desires and be perfectly satisfied."

But how to burn the seeds of desires? It is easier said than done. It is declared in the Gita, "The turbulent senses do violently snatch away the mind of even a wise man striving for perfection." The seat of desire, the Lord says, is the senses, the mind and the intellect, and it can be controlled through Vairagya and Abhyasa, *i. e.* dispassion and practice. Vairagya is withdrawal of the mind from all the sense objects and concentrating it on God who is the source of real happiness. Abhyasa is practising to keep the mind fast on God whenever it goes in pursuit of sensual enjoyments. But

Vairagya does not come to those who have not gone through the experience of desire in some form or other.

This dispassion towards sense objects should not be mistaken for the indifference displayed by a dull Tamasic man towards them, for he with his undeveloped brain cannot desire. A saint also does not desire. The extremes are alike, but the saint has gone through the experience of life and the other has not. When the vibrations of ether are low, we do not see the light, it is darkness. When they are very high, then also we do not see the light.

A wise man having gone through the experience of sense enjoyments finds out that these are parents of misery and the cause of birth and death, and hence he does not seek pleasure in them. He gives up all desires and by means of renunciation withdraws his senses from their objects just as the tortoise tucks up its limbs in times of danger. He then fixes his mind on the Atman which has neither birth nor death and becomes 'Immortal and happy'. "He who can withstand in this world, before the liberation from this body, the impulse arising from both anger and lust, he is steadfast (in Yoga), he is a happy man"—(Gita).

Now what is meant by giving up desires? If man gives up desires how can life go on? It would be suicidal, for killing desire means killing the man too with it. If there is no desire, it is true there is no suffering. The stones and walls have no desires and they never suffer. Stones are stones, they never grow, never evolve. There are many things we have done in our lives which we wish we had never done but which at the same time have been great teachers, and have helped us to be what we are today. The true solution

lies not in killing desires, but in not being affected by their objects, in seeing the glory of God in everything. The ocean is not at all affected by the waters flowing into it from all sides. Similarly, that man alone finds true peace and his wisdom becomes steady in whom no reaction of desire is produced by the objects of enjoyment,

which he happens to come across during his sojourn on earth. God is in the desire that rises in our mind. He is in the things we possess to satisfy our desires. The Gita says:—"The self-controlled man moving among objects with senses under restraint, and free from attraction and aversion attains to tranquillity."

## BUDDHA AND SANKARA\*

*Swami Iswaramanda*

**I**T is a strange coincidence that today we are celebrating the birthdays of two great personalities of India, whose lives and missions had been looked upon as opposed to each other's. The one was supposed to be an atheist, nihilist, or agnostic, denouncing and dethroning the gods, and the other a Brahmin to whom God alone was true and nothing else existed; the one defying the authority of age-long traditions and scriptures, the other a champion of the Vedas the authority of which was supreme and infallible; the one keenly alive to the injustice, inequalities, and distinctions of privilege in the social order of Varnashrama, the other a defender and upholder of the orthodox conservatism; the one giving away his hard earned experiences to one and all without any distinction, admitting even the lowest of the low to his Order, the other a zealous guardian of the purity of the traditional culture and learning, withholding the same from the vulgar gaze of the masses; the one depending solely on his own realisations and the profundity of his native wisdom, the other a vast ocean of scriptural knowledge; the one intensely practical and solely concerned with immediate

problems, hating all speculation and hairsplitting intellectualism, the other supremely metaphysical, who revelled in the glories of philosophical warfare and wrote volumes after volumes of books, conscious of his intellectual powers, challenging and defeating all who differed from him; the one denounced as heterodox and his religion and his name banished from India, the other on the contrary a name to be conjured with among the vast majority of Hindus. That Bhagavan Buddha and Bhagavan Sankara could be worshipped on the same day and on the same altar side by side is full of significance for the future of India. This is the reassertion once more of the great characteristic of the Indo-Aryan civilisation whose supreme merit consists in its capacity to see the unity behind all diversities, its genius for synthesis, its passion for harmony, its power for assimilation, absorption, integration and reintegration. It is the expression of the same genius which declared through Bhagavan Krishna, "In whatever way men seek me, in that particular way do I reveal myself unto them" and "Whatever being there is, endowed with grandeur, beauty or strength, know

\* Paper read on the joint celebration of the birthdays of Buddha and Sankara.

that it has sprung only from a spark of my splendour"; that made the Pouranikas see in Bhagavan Buddha who never preached a God, the Avatara of Vishnu; which suspected a Prachinanna Buddha in Sankara, the great antagonist of Buddhism. Today that genius of India is once more awake and is engaged in the mighty task of co-ordinating and synthesising the great conflicting spiritual and cultural forces in and outside India.

In fact there is nothing strange in Resurgent India once more welcoming the Light of the World to accept her adoration and her worship. This is only the last and unfinished step of a movement which was going on for centuries together, which was the cause of the nominal disappearance of Buddhism from the land of its birth, a movement which was in reality a reabsorption of the rebel child into the bosom of the mother church. Having contributed all that was original and life-giving in it the new reform movement lost itself in the immensity of the mother church and ceased to live as a separate household. The strong pessimistic outlook of Buddhism, with its eye always on the misery and impermanence of life, greatly modified the optimistic outlook of the age of the Upanishads and of the Gita, leaving its legacy to the later Vedantic movement beginning with Sankara. With the advent of Buddhism renunciation gained an importance and a popularity which it never had to the same extent before; monasticism became a widespread social institution. By way of philosophy its chief contribution was that it equipped the Maya Vada of Sankara with arguments with which he could defeat the Dvaitins who argued for the independent reality of soul, God, and universe. Sankara himself was keenly aware of

this and admitted the resemblance of his system to Buddhism, of course adding a protest that Advaita was based on the pivot of the Absolute and not on Sunya Vada. Panchadashi, a later Vedantic work, has argued that the Sunya of the Buddhists is in reality the Brahman of the Vedantins. Other Vedantic writers too have similarly identified the one with the other. On the ritualistic side Bhagavan Buddha gave a blow to the religion of Yagas, Yagnas and animal sacrifices, which the Vedic religion could no more revive; and Buddhist kings like Asoka enforced non-killing on pain of penalty. The ritualistic religion which had persisted in spite of the Upanishadic movement and the Gita, both of which had laid stress on the spiritual aspect, came to a stand still for centuries together, so that it must have helped Sankara a good deal in putting down the reactionary movement under Kumarilla Bhatta before it grew too strong. The ethics of compassion and non-killing emphasised by Buddhism and carried to its extreme in Jainism has been bequeathed to and retained even to this day in modern Vaishnavism. The democratic spirit in religion, though found in its seed in the Upanishads and the Gita, was never allowed to grow and reach the masses, and it remained for Buddha to throw open the gates of knowledge and Mukti to the high and the low alike. The later movements started by Ramanuja, Chaitanya, Kabir and Nanak and a host of others were all carrying forward the momentum of the Buddhist movement. Again, modern popular Hinduism, its extensive image worship, temples and processions were all the gifts of Buddhism, not to say anything special about its contribution to architecture and sculpture. Even today the image of Buddha is worshipped in many

temples in Malabar under the name of Sasta, the son of Siva born of Vishnu, the legendary concoction of the age of the Puranas. There are very ancient Hindu temples in Orissa with the images of Buddha on their walls, pointing to the fact that these were wholly taken over along with their devotees into the Vedic fold. An Order of monks closely organised under elaborate rules and regulations, with established centres and monasteries, and carrying on propaganda on a vast scale was the gift of Buddha to which Bhagavan Sankara was not a little indebted in the founding of his own Order.

Though the author of the Bhagavata has mentioned him as an Avatara, it was only blind prejudice and fanaticism that could not find a way to accept the personality of the Buddha, the Enlightened, the Awakener, the Compassionate, the Liberator, whose character stands unsurpassed in the world of men as a veritable manifestation of the Divine on earth. Today we can no longer be without him, whose lasting contribution to the civilisation of the world is his own sublime personality. A greater renunciation the world has not seen than of this prince surrounded by all the comforts of life. He takes to the life of a beggar, and for what? Not for his own liberation but to find out a way to put an end to the misery of the millions around him. बहुजनहिताय बहुजनसुखाय—that was the sole motive of his life's labours. Though thousands worshipped at his feet he disclaimed all superhumanity for himself. He said he was a man like any of us and Buddhahood was the birthright of one and all without distinction. A man of supreme self-reliance, he taught the same manliness to his disciples. His method and his outlook were, like those of the Jnani and the Yogi, discriminative

analysis and self-control, and in work he was a perfect Karma Yogi. Though he did not submit to the authority of any scriptures, the essence of his teaching was the same as that of the Upanishads; only he laid more stress on the means rather than define the exact nature of the Ultimate Reality. It was enough for him that Samsara with its misery was extinct whatever else may lie beyond it. Though heterodox in all appearance he was really orthodox in spirit, and that was why the so-called 'denouncer' of God became an Avatar of God. Buddha was neither a Sunya Vadin (nihilist) nor a Nirisvara Vadin (atheist), he had simply no Vada about these things, neither 'yes' nor 'no'. Nor was he an agnostic. An agnostic is one who says, "I do not know, nor do I think it ever possible to know the Ultimate Truth." He does not think it ever possible to find a solution. But Buddha knew that, knowing which all doubts are dispelled, knots of the heart are cut asunder, and all Karma comes to an end. He had no name for that which defies all attempt at definition. His position was that of the Upanishadic Rishi who declared, "I do not think that I know it well, nor do I think that I know it not. He among us knows it truly who knows this *viz.*, nor do I know that I know it not."

Nor was Buddha a mere moral philosopher. No doubt his moral teachings are unsurpassed, but then morality was to him a means to an end. No system of morality undertakes to root out all misery of Samsara. Goodness is not always happiness and peace, nor is it identical with freedom. But Buddha gave an ultimate solution of the problems of life. It is therefore a baseless charge that Buddhism is only a system of ethics and not a religion. To us it seems the only epithet which would suit him is Nirvana

Vadin. Everything of his preaching was contained in that. Attain Nirvana by following the eightfold path and then all problems are solved, all questionings are answered, all doubts vanish. Karma ceases, misery comes to an end, the wheel of birth and death are cut asunder. It is not darkness, it is enlightenment, it is illumination, it is Buddhahood. The Blessed One says, "Enter ye all into it and attain to infinite peace, the peace that passeth all understanding."

"Be earnest then, O brethren, holy,  
full of thought,

Be steadfast in resolve! keep watch  
over your hearts ;

Who wearies not, but holds fast to  
this truth and law

Shall cross this sea of life, shall make  
an end of grief."

But there were defects in the movement and Bhagavan Sankara came to remove them. Weak mortals as we are, we want a God to whose face we could look up in the days of sorrow, who could support us in the dark despair of tribulation. Buddhism had not provided for it. The inspiring personality of the Blessed One was removed by thirteen centuries and was disfigured beyond recognition by a heap of miracles that had gathered round him. Hundreds of tribes, aboriginal and alien, that crowded into the fold of Buddha swamped Buddhism with their own superstitions and under their weight Buddhism degenerated into hideous necromancy and hobgoblin worship. Secret Vamaachara practices further demoralised the purity of Buddha's cult. Moreover Buddhism, while it broke down the rigidity of the old social order, did not replace it by a definite scheme of social life for the laity. Also the philosophical edifice of Buddhism did not rest on a satisfactory hypothesis. So when Bhagavan Sankara came with a

rational philosophy and a theistic religion, reviving the old complete scheme of social code, the crumbling edifice of Buddhism crashed. India was reconquered for the mother church. The supremacy of the Vedas was re-established. The scheme of Varnashrama Dharma was revived, and many an alien crowd found some place or other in it. Caste distinctions which had gone lax were made rigorous. Privileges were guarded. Sanskrit, known only to the few, became once more the language of religion and literature, and gained unprecedented prestige. In fact India was again at least nominally re-Aryanised. The reactionary movement for ritualism led by Kumarilla Bhatta was nipped in the bud and Jnana Kanda was proclaimed as the essence of religion. The Upanishads were systematically interpreted and all the philosophical systems were synthesised into one whole under the hegemony of Advaita. Alien gods were all adopted into the family of the Vedic gods or were transformed into the Supreme God by the philosophy of the one Brahman immanent in all Gods. The greatest achievement of Sankara was the formulation of the Advaita philosophy, the best flower of Indian thought and the crowning glory of Hinduism. Even today Sankara's name stands supreme in the world of thought and philosophy, and will go down to posterity as one of the immortal names in Hinduism.

Bhagavan Sankara and his band of Saanyasins achieved a good deal and brought order from chaos. But today we are again encountered by almost the same problems as Sankara had, and a great work is awaiting the followers of Sanatana Dharma, to be accomplished under the inspiration of his genius and his synthetic outlook. Firstly, there is the task of achieving the harmony of philosophies and religions of the world

and putting a stop to religious quarrels and fanaticism and sectarian bigotry by flooding the world with the message of Vedanta. Secondly, there is the immense task of creating social solidarity in India. Is it ever possible to weld all India into one Aryan scheme of life and culture, or failing it, to find the means of co-ordinating the different types of cultures into one ordered whole and thus to put a stop to these suicidal internecine quarrels between different religious sections and also between the different communal and sectarian groups within Hinduism? Thirdly, there is the task of bringing down the Advaita from the brains of the Pandits and the seclusion of the monasteries into the everyday life of society. Shraddha must be brought into the heart of the dispirited helpless masses of India by making them hear of the message of fearlessness of Vedanta. What is wrong with the traditional interpretation of the Varnashrama Dharma that today more than half of the Hindus are Hindus only in name and do not get any of the benefits of that culture? How is it that, in spite of this boasted Varnashrama Dharma, the lot of the millions and millions of human beings in this land is no better than that of mere animals? How is it that the masses of India have been all along starving, ignorant and timid, getting nothing but kicks and contempt in return for feeding the Varnashramis with the product their toil? Driven to the wall, denied all opportunities for Dharma, Artha, Kama or Moksha, cringing for permission for mere existence, they have been serving us without a murmur of protest, their life almost gone out of them, too feeble to voice their wants—how is it that they could not find a place in the Varnashrama? It has been told in justifi-

cation that it is their Karma. Yes, we do not doubt it is their Karma. They placed infinite trust in the higher castes, waited in infinite patience, and gave unquestioning obedience until all manliness has gone out of them: a mass of timidity is all that is left. Yes, that was the Karma they did. And today they are reaping the fruit of their foolish trust. But if the Varnashramis had known the dire consequences of their own action, *viz.* the inhuman treatment meted out to the masses, they would not have resorted to the luxuries of metaphysical subtlety and invoked the aid of Karma in defence of their own selfishness. By the grace of God the dumb millions are today awake and are knocking at our doors, claiming their ancient heritage. If we do not listen, if we do not give back their rights, if we do not stretch forth our hand of brotherhood even at this late hour, there may occur a mass revolution with all its attendant horrors in a generation or two. Let us hope that orthodoxy will spare us that fate.

There is yet time to mend our ways before it is too late. It is clear that there is something fundamentally wrong in the orthodox interpretation of the Varnashrama Dharma, which has created such a situation. But the tragedy of it is that this has happened while the right interpretation is there all along in our scriptures. Space forbids us to go into the details. To put it briefly, we have to bring down Advaita which preaches the unity of all existence into our dealings between man and man. It must be converted into love, into equality, into freedom, into equal opportunities for all. Let us take to our heart that lesson taught by Sri Kashivisvanatha to Acharya Sankara, embodied in the beautiful verses of *Manishapan-chakam* showing that Advaita has a

place in society as well as in the monasteries and the forests. Instead of crying hoarse in the name of Varnashrama Dharma for the sake of privileges, let one and all be invited to share the best fruits of it, without distinctions of caste and sex. Let us cry halt to the existing Varnashrama-

Adharma. We want today the brilliant intellect of Sankara yoked to the great compassion and love of Buddha whose heart melted at the thought of the misery of all creatures. Such a combination alone can work out a real solution of the varied problems of the day.

## A SCHEME FOR CHILD-WELFARE WORK

### *Object and Scope of the Work*

THE appallingly high rates of infant mortality prevailing in India are now well recognised, and there are many efforts, both Governmental and private, for improving the conditions of child-life. These efforts have not met with the success expected, on account of the diffused nature of the activities and the fact that the care of the infant begins very often only from its birth and not from the beginning of its existence in the mother's womb. The safeguarding of infant health requires careful and continued attention throughout the prenatal period as well as the first year of life. Under Indian conditions any service that aims at this attention for prenatal and infant care should be free and should be accompanied by educative work among the masses in order to make them understand the need for such care. This scheme has therefore in view an efficient prenatal and infant service both in special clinics and through home-visits, supplemented in either case by instruction on the hygiene of expectant motherhood and child-life; also suitable arrangements for skilled aid during confinement. The work is to be carried on intensively in a selected area, and later on, when new units of work are opened, to keep the first unit as a training-ground for the nurses and

midwives required for this kind of work in villages.

### *Preliminary Work*

A preliminary survey will first be made in the selected area in order to determine the number and location of the expectant mothers and infants who require this attention. This work can be carried on by the midwives, assisted by the nurses. The area may be divided into sections, one for each midwife, and with the aid of census registers from the Municipal Office each home may be visited in turn. The midwife registers all the expectant mothers and infants in a prescribed form. These cases are later on copied out in the prenatal and infant cards by the nurse who completes the remaining entries in the card by making visits to these homes. She then talks to the expectant mothers on the advantages of prenatal and infant care and advises them to attend the nearest clinic once a week for this purpose. Further attention to them can be given at the clinic, but there will be some who will not put in their appearance at the clinic, and these have to be visited again in their homes but at less frequent intervals, say, once or twice a month. The preliminary work ends with the registration of all the expectant mothers and infants and advice to them to attend the clinic.

*Prenatal and Infant Clinics*

These may be held in private homes, there being at least one clinic for each midwife's section. The nurse is in charge of the clinic, and the midwife working in that area assists her. The clinics may be held in the morning or evening according to the convenience of the people of the locality. The clinic work includes the examination of the expectant mothers and infants, weighing, attention to minor ailments, etc., and is wound up with a short talk of fifteen minutes on some aspect of prenatal or infant care. These talks should be prepared previously so that they may be thorough and made to cover the whole subject in the course of a few months. Where many young girls attend the clinic, "Little Mothers' Leagues" may be formed for their instruction in infant care, hygiene, embroidery, making babies' dresses, etc. The doctor attends every clinic towards the latter half of every clinic period and examines those persons who are kept waiting for that purpose by the nurse. She should also see that the normal cases are seen by her at least once a month. Advice regarding diet, etc., is usually given by the nurse under instructions from the doctor, but special diet has to be prescribed by the latter. Any treatment carried on can only be on advice from the doctor.

*Home-visits*

Regular home-visiting is done by the nurses on non-clinic days for the purpose of registering new cases, seeing the old cases and persuading the unwilling persons to visit the clinics. During home-visits the nurse should also attempt to supervise and assist the work of the midwife. Home-visits by the midwife are made for attending labour cases and for post-natal care for ten succeeding days; also to persuade re-

luctant prospective mothers to visit the clinic.

*Care During Labour*

This is usually given at the home by the midwife called in. She renders all assistance during confinement, bathes the child and dresses the cord, visits the mother and baby for ten consecutive days and then hands over charge of the baby to the nurse, who makes the first few examinations in the home and then arranges to have the child brought to the clinic once a week. Where home conditions are very unsatisfactory, or complications are expected, the patient should be asked to go to the hospital for delivery. If the case is not a normal one, the midwife should immediately send for the doctor.

As part of this scheme provision will be made at the Central Office for a few beds constituting a labour ward.

*Accommodation*

We intend to begin the work in Calcutta with a Central Office, which will accommodate the administrative section, the labour ward and quarters for the nurses and midwives. The clinics, as already said, will be held in some suitable private residences.

*Staff and Duties*

The first Child-Welfare unit under this scheme will work with a staff of one Lady Assistant Surgeon, two public Health Nurses and eight Midwives. One nurse can supervise the work of four midwives after the work is organised, and when this stage is reached eight clinics can be held weekly, one in each midwife's area, under the supervision of both the nurses. If this staff of midwives is not immediately available, the services of the second nurse may be utilised in the labour ward. One Assistant Surgeon can take charge of two nurses' units. Her duties will be to examine and advise cases kept for

her at the clinic, to respond to the call for help from midwives or from the labour ward, to assist the nurses in the preparation of their talks to mothers, and to review the work at weekly conferences. When only one nurse's unit is working, this work can be done on a part-time basis, but a whole-time Assistant Surgeon will be needed when both the labour ward and a second nurse's unit are opened.

#### *Area of Work*

Any locality that will call forth sufficient co-operation, will be the best for this work. Taking about 60 per cent of the population of any area as likely to come within the scope of this scheme and calculating on a birthrate of 40 per thousand of the population, a complete unit with one medical officer, two nurses and eight midwives can serve a population of 60,000 at the rate of 15 cases to a midwife per month.

#### *Working Hours*

The working hours for the staff will be from 8 to 12 in the morning and from 2 to 5 in the afternoon. Emergency calls must be attended to at other hours also. Every Saturday afternoon the staff will hold a conference to review the week's work and to make an advance programme for the next week.

#### *Cost*

The cost, roughly estimated, will be Rs. 10,000 per year for a full unit as described above. When funds are available, the work can be extended by multiplying the number of units.

The above scheme is being submitted to the generous public for their kind consideration and hearty support. In pursuance of our policy in the field of constructive work, we are again venturing on a new line of activity for which, we feel, there is a great need in the country. The future of a nation depends on the well-being of its children. It is for this reason that this subject has engaged the careful attention of all progressive countries. If our public feel the same way, as we believe they do, we are sure there will be an adequate response from them without which no work of this kind can grow. Swami Dayananda, who has recently returned from America after successful Vedanta work in San Francisco for nearly six years, during which time he had opportunities to make a special study of the Child-Welfare activities in that country, has been entrusted by the Mission with organising the work here.

We cordially invite the kind-hearted public to help the Mission in this new venture.

# MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

In describing Viswa as A (the first syllable of Om), the strong similarity consists in both occupying the first place and both being all-pervasive. (19)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

When Viswa and A are said to be one, the strong point of similarity is that both are first. This is prominently seen. Their all-pervasiveness is also another strong point of similarity.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

In knowing Taijasa as U, the second syllable (of Om), the superiority is plainly seen. So also their occupying the middle position. (20)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

In saying that Taijasa is to be known as U the superiority is plainly visible. So also is the middle position they both occupy.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

When Pragna is considered to be M, the third Pada (syllable) of Om, the chief points of similarity are 'measure' and 'everything becoming latent in it'. (21)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

In saying that Pragna is M, the meaning is that they are similar as regards 'measure' and latency of everything.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

He who has a certain (firm) knowledge of the grounds of similar-

ity in these three cases, is fit for worship by all beings, deserves prostrations and is a great sage. (22)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

He who has firmly established (in himself) the knowledge of the grounds of similarity in the above mentioned three states (waking &c.) is fit for worship and prostration (by all) and becomes a knower of Brahman.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

A takes one to Viswa, U to Taijasa and M to Pragna. In the absence of Padas (syllables) there is no going at all. (23)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

After one gets from the aforesaid similarities, a knowledge of the identity of the (three) differentiations of Atman with the three Matras (syllables of Om), if one gets to know what Om means and contemplates on that, A will take such a man to Viswa, that is, will make him attain Viswa. The meaning is that one who knows Om as supported by A, becomes Vaiswanara himself. Similarly, U makes one attain Taijasa and M Pragna. As, when M disappears, there is no root-cause (Avidya) in the Om devoid of Padas (feet or syllables), there is no going anywhere.

## *Upanishad*

The fourth is without Padas (syllables), transcends all experience, is devoid of all phenomenal existence, is all bliss and non-dual. Thus Om is Atman only. He who

knows in this manner, realises himself in himself. (12)

*Sankara's Commentary*

He who has no Matras (syllables) is the Om devoid of Matras (syllables). The fourth is Turiya and is only Atman. He transcends all experience, as he cannot be grasped by speech and mind which are of the nature of a thing and its name. (He is) devoid of all phenomenal existence (such as, the world and its content). (He is) auspicious (being of the nature of bliss). He is Atman devoid of all duality. Om of three syllables, as above described, is one with Atman with three differentiations (that is, Viswa, Taijasa and Pragna). He who has such a knowledge realises the true Atman in himself. The knower of Brahman having realised the truth and having burnt the root-cause or the third (Pragna), enters into his own Atman and is not reborn, as Turiya is devoid of the root-cause (Avidya).

When the rope and the snake are differentiated and known one apart from the other, the snake superimposed on the rope never appears again to the knower. If dull persons, persons of moderate intellect, learners, those following the path of the good, and renouncers of action, meditate on the similarity and know that the three syllables and three differentiations are mere superimpositions, and contemplate on the Om, such contemplation will be the basis for (acquiring) the knowledge of Brahman. That is why it is said later on that there are three Asramas (stages of life).

On this subject there are the following verses.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

Om should be known Pada by Pada (one part after another.) There is no doubt that the Padas

(feet) are Matras (syllables). After knowing Om Pada by Pada, nothing else should be thought of. (24)

*Sankara's Commentary*

As before, there are verses on this subject. On account of the previously described similarities, the Padas are Matras and Matras are Padas. This is what is meant by saying that Om should be known one Pada after another. Any one who knows Om has all his desires fulfilled. He should not think of any use seen or unseen or of any other purpose whatsoever.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

One must fix one's mind in Om (Pranava). Pranava is Brahman devoid of all fear. To him whose mind is always fixed in Pranava, there will be no fear anywhere. (25)

*Sankara's Commentary*

One must fix one's mind in Om (of the nature of Turiya) as has been explained above, because Pranava is fearless Brahman. One who is always contemplating (on Pranava) will have no fear anywhere. This is supported by Taitt. Up. "To one who knows (Brahman) there is no fear from anything."

*Gaudapada's Karika*

It is said that Pranava is the lower (associated with Upadhi) Brahman and that the (same) Pranava is the higher (Nirguna or having no Upadhis) Brahman. Pranava has nothing prior to it, has nothing inside it or outside it, has nothing after it and is not subject to destruction. (26)

*Sankara's Commentary*

The higher and lower Brahman are (both) Pranava. When properly considered, Matras and Padas (syllables

and feet) do not exist, and so Pranava is Brahman or Parabrahman. As there is nothing prior to it in the form of a cause, it is Apurva (having nothing prior to it). As there is nothing inside it different from it, it is Anantara (having nothing in it). Similarly there is nothing outside it, different from it. There is nothing after it in the form of an effect. It means that like a mass of salt, it is a mass of (undifferentiated) Consciousness, having nothing outside of it or inside of it and being without origin.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Pranava is the beginning, middle and end of everything. If one understands Pranava in this way, he will attain (it) at once. (27)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

Pranava is the beginning, middle and end, that is the origin, subsistence and destruction of everything. That is to say, it is the cause of the origin &c., of the whole universe beginning with Akasa, just as the magician &c. produce the magic-elephant, rope-snake, mirage, dreams &c. If one understands Pranava as the Atman who takes the place of the magician &c., that very moment he realises the Atman.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Pranava should be known as the Iswara present in the hearts of all.

The wise man who knows the all-pervading Om knows no sorrow. (28)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

One must know that the Iswara who is the basis in all living beings of memory and knowledge, is Pranava. The wise man who knows Om as all-pervading like Akasa to be Atman untainted by Samsara (the phenomenal universe of duality), has no cause for sorrow. This is supported by Chandogya Upanishad: "The knower of Atman crosses (passes beyond) sorrow".

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

One who knows the Om which is not subject to measure (limit), whose measure is endless (unlimited), which is non-dual and of the nature of (absolute) bliss, he alone is the sage: other people are not. (29)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

Om is Turiya having no Matra (measure or limit). Matra means measure. When a thing is unmeasurable (unlimited), it is Anantamatra. This means that it is something which cannot be measured as being so much. As there is non-duality, it is bliss. He who knows Om as above explained will be contemplating on the true nature of Atman and therefore he is called Muni (sage). Though others may know Sastras (sciences), they are no sages.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### **Child-Welfare Work**

We wish to draw the attention of our readers to a scheme for child-welfare work that is published elsewhere in this issue of Vedanta Kesari. The various forms of philanthropic activities that the Ramakrishna Mission has been carrying on in this country for the past few decades consist mostly

of relief work, educational work, and medical aid. The present scheme for child-welfare, therefore, marks the inclusion of a new form of service in the Mission's programme of constructive work in the country.

The problem of infant mortality in India has for some time past engaged the serious attention of all well wishers

of the country. It is said that the progress and material welfare of a country can be determined from the rate of infant deaths obtaining therein. Judged by this standard India falls far behind the mark. The statistics relating to public health reveal the appalling high rate of infant deaths in the big cities of India, while the conditions in the villages, though inadequately known for want of documental evidence, cannot in any way be expected to be better under the existing circumstances. Unsatisfactory housing conditions, want of adequate physical rest for carrying mothers, the crude and insanitary nature of the available medical aid in child-birth, inadequate attention and feeding in the early life of the baby are among the reasons for this huge waste of human life. It is true that some of these causes cannot be remedied until the country becomes wealthier on the whole and the general standard of life is raised from the hopelessly low level obtaining at the present day. But there is no doubt that much of this waste can be prevented, if better medical aid is made accessible

to mothers in child-birth, and necessary instruction is given to them regarding prenatal care and the requirements of infant health in the first year after birth. The scheme that the Mission has in view seeks to do this most essential work.

Swami Dayananda, who has been entrusted by the Mission authorities with the task of organising the work, was in America for the past six years as a preacher of Vedanta. The Swami, while attending to his spiritual mission, devoted his spare time for the study of child-welfare work in America, and has, since his return some months ago, been visiting various centres of child-welfare work in India for gaining direct knowledge of the conditions under which the work has to be done in our country. Hence with his first-hand knowledge of the child-welfare activities both in India and America, the Swami is most eminently fitted for organising the work that the Mission proposes to start. It is hoped that our public will appreciate this work, and will adequately respond to the Mission's call for money and workers.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THY SELF THY DOCTOR:** *By A Recluse. Published by the Saraswati Sangham, 28 Pindari Koil St., G. T., Madras. Pages 108. Price: As 6.*

This is the 15th publication of the Sangham. The author is the Principal of the "School of Indian Treatment" and the consulting physician of the Saraswati Dharma Aushadhalaya and its branches. "The Lord of the universe, Thy Self, is the best Doctor," "Celibacy is the best tonic"—these two extracts from the motto printed before the Introduction indicate the character of the remedies prescribed. Control of appetites, hygiene and preventive side are stressed on almost every page, and rightly too. But where modern medical men will raise an alarm is the portions condemning the germ and contagion theory and the prevalent methods of inoculation and vaccination. Basing on the success his own methods have given him, the

author boldly throws out a challenge and offers to demonstrate the truth of his contentions. He does not preach against surgical methods wholesale, for "big wounds, dislocations and fractures" we are told, "will have to be treated by experienced surgeons". But when the author attacks modern doctors by saying, for instance, that "many cases are wrongly diagnosed as Appendicitis and cut in order to keep the patient ever miserable", we come across a spirit which does no one any real benefit and which therefore we find it impossible to appreciate.

**KANDAN THE PATRIOT:** *By K. S. Venkataramani, M. A., B. L., Swetaranaya Ashrama, Mylapore. Pages 261. Price: Rs. 2.*

Mr. Venkataramani has this time brought out a book, keeping himself perfectly in tune with the latest developments of the Indian struggle for

freedom. The volume is most aptly dedicated to the "Unknown Volunteer" who has fallen in the noble conflict. Kandan, the Patriot, is an I. C. S. man who relinquishes the prospects of acquiring wealth and titles by remaining in Government Service and resolves instead to devote his time and energy for the uplift of his suffering countrymen. Deliberately and with great wisdom he selects for his work a small village where civilisation is just beginning to roll in in the shape of a railway line, through the influence of the landlord, Mr. Mudaliar. Mr. Mudaliar owns a toddy shop—the very first in the locality—which happened to be set up some months earlier as an advance post of the railway branch. Among the votaries of this pleasure house, the poor, illiterate dependants of Mr. Mudaliar himself, "inflammable" fellows, but possessing hearts which could be won over by genuine love, Kandan has his "Ashrama"; and from there he "distributes Charka and Khaddar clothes" to the needy, counsels them, helps them, puts up with their follies and forgives them in a manner possible only for a saint. Mr. Mudaliar finds in Kandan an enemy more dangerous than the ordinary "picketer", and plans to put him down by "concocting wild tales" and soliciting official intervention. Meanwhile, Rangan, another I.C.S. man who has chosen to remain in Service, makes a fruitless marriage proposal to Rajeswari Bai, the friend of Rangan and Kandan while at Oxford, but now Mahatmaji's disciple, engaged actively in the national struggle. Rangan's faith in Government Service is shaken by her refusal and patriotic ardour; their talks are reported promptly by a C.I.D. officer; and Rangan is forthwith transferred to Palni hills, in striking

agreement with Rajeswari's half-humorous prophecy. Rangan indignantly resigns and determines to address a public meeting which the police immediately prohibit. Whether Lovo's missiles are the ideal stimuli for patriotic fervour, and whether women's refusal to waive aside marriage till freedom's cause is won can suddenly transform men of the Mudaliar and C.I.D. type, one can hardly affirm and lay down as a general rule. But Mr. Mudaliar and the C.I.D. of the book do change and rally round Kandan. Just prior to this, the drinking men became "inflamed" by Kandan's well-meant words, and at night looted Mr. Mudaliar's property and set fire to his toddy shop. The author here, as elsewhere, brings out the simple, yet sad and tragic truth that when passions somehow get aroused, the common masses often find it beyond their power to observe strict non-violence. Mr. Mudaliar, hoping his favours to the D.S.P. will be cherished by that officer, confidently steps up to the police line—the Malabar Reserves usually drafted to Tamil lands with such terrible efficacy. They roughly handle him; then his dependants of the tavern, now his supporters, attack the police and shooting begins. A bullet hits Kandan and the silent hero falls. Arrests and award of S. I. and R. I. are later announced in the papers. We lay down the book, overpowered by a sense of the immensity of the constructive work to be done in the villages, of the dangers attending it and the sacrifices which that glorious up-hill task may demand. The book has other beauties too. Its fine descriptions, as of the railway station or of domestic quarrels, its effective groupings of characters, all reveal the artistic sense of the author.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### The Ramakrishna Math Charitable Dispensary, Mylapore

The Ramakrishna Math Charitable Dispensary, Mylapore, Madras, has now completed the sixth year of its

existence. The total number of patients treated came to 58,905, while the figure for the previous twelve months was only 51,567. Of these 23,442 were new cases, of which again, 2,410 required minor operations including injections.

Since the scope of the work is thus increasing by leaps and bounds, the necessity has begun to be more and more felt for putting the institution on a sound basis and securing the permanence of the service it renders to the poor. The following are some of its pressing needs. (1) *A Pucca Dispensary Building.* The Dispensary continues to be in a thatched shed still. During the year the length of the shed was increased to some extent, yet the accommodation is insufficient, and it is therefore proposed to erect a spacious building, with special rooms for examination, operations, etc., at an estimated cost of Rs. 20,000, against which a sum of Rs. 5,798-11-6 has already been subscribed. Arrangements can be made to put up inscribed tablets to perpetuate the memory of persons on whose behalf the amount necessary for building one or more rooms or the entire block itself is subscribed. (2) *A General Maintenance Fund.* During the year generous individuals as well as Firms, Indian and foreign, gave medicines and other gifts in kind to the extent of Rs. 1,019-11-0. In addition to these, the Dispensary had to purchase medicines and accessories to the value of Rs. 864-4-0, or nearly Rs.75 per month on an average. To meet this recurring expense as well as to defray the expenses for maintaining two whole-time workers, the salary of the paid clerk, the allowance given to the Doctor, etc., a sum of at least Rs. 250 is required every month. Rs. 300 has up till now been subscribed as a "Permanent Fund" for maintenance. (3) *Modern Appliances and Outfits.* Owing to the want of many modern appliances and outfits, the institution is not able to serve all the patients that come for treatment or to take the fullest advantage of the talents and experience of the Doctor in charge. The management hopes that the generous public will continue their active sympathy and co-operation and contribute liberally for removing the immediate needs of this philanthropic institution.

### R. K. Mission Sevashram, Brindavan

Like many other places of pilgrimage, Brindavan also suffers from overcrowding, privation and disease, which culminate often in virulent outbreaks of epidemics, causing untold miseries to the people of the locality and to the new-comers from distant parts. For the last twenty-five years the R. K. Mission has been trying through its Sevashram to afford relief, as far as possible, to the poor and helpless persons overtaken by sickness and destitution. The total number of in-patients it admitted during the year was 331 against 303 in the previous year. These, it need hardly be said, came from various castes, races and classes of people hailing from different parts of the country. Outdoor relief was given to 37,917 patients as against 34,671 in the previous year. These consisted chiefly of pilgrims, Sadhus, Vidyarthi and the poor of Brindavan and Mathura. Pecuniary help in the shape of monthly doles was also rendered to a few extreme cases of privation, according as funds permitted. The total income during the year was Rs. 10,373-11-3 and the expenses Rs. 8,781-7-3, thus leaving a rather slender cash balance for the new year. The Sevashram was able to erect a separate Ward for women patients. Accommodation is still insufficient. A special Surgical Ward has become indispensable. The Outdoor Dispensary too has to be housed properly, with better arrangements for a Doctor's room, a private examination room, dispensing room, etc. A strong embankment to protect the Ashrama from the ravages of the flood and a guest house are also some of the long-felt needs of the institution. The finances of the Sevashrama have been hardly satisfactory. The small permanent fund has to be strengthened. The management hopes that the sympathy of the generous public will enable it to remove these needs and keep the work on a secure basis.





Rao Sahib C. RAMASWAMI AIYANGAR  
Secretary, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students Home



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XIX]

JULY, 1932

[No. 3

## HINDU ETHICS

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यस्त्वविज्ञानवान्भवत्यमनस्कः सदाऽशुचिः ।

न स तत्पदमाप्नोति संसारं चाधिगच्छति ॥

यस्तु विज्ञानवान्भवति समनस्कः सदा शुचिः ।

स तु तत्पदमाप्नोति यस्माद्भूयो न जायते ॥

विज्ञानसारयिर्यस्तु मनः प्रग्रहवान्नरः ।

सोऽध्वनः पारमाप्नोति तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥

He who has no understanding, who is unmindful and always impure, never reaches the goal but gets into the round of births and deaths.

But he who has understanding, who is mindful and ever pure, reaches the goal whence he is not born again.

He who has understanding for his charioteer and who holds the reins of the mind attains the end of his journey,—the supreme realisation of the All-pervading Spirit.

KATHA UPANISHAD

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

(Continued from page 45)

## THE MASTER IN BHAVA MUKHA

### *The Mood Necessary for Giving*

#### *Power of Attorney*

**I**T is not an easy affair to give to the Lord one's power of attorney. When as the result of repeated efforts and endeavours a person comes to possess the right mental attitude, then only does he surrender himself in the true spirit, and the Lord also take his charge. When man realises after a long and tedious search that his hope of securing happiness through external objects has been like the pursuit of a lifeless shadow; when having tried his best to undergo spiritual practices and disciplines, he knows in his heart of hearts that these can never be a sufficient price for the realisation of the Infinite Being; when after being engaged in various pursuits with an indomitable energy, ready even to cut his way through the rocks, he comes to feel that he has no power whatsoever to achieve his end; when thrown into such a plight he begins to cry out piteously for help, "Do Thou save me, O Saviour, wherever Thou be,"—it is only then that the Lord accepts his power of attorney.

#### *Beware of Self-deception*

But power of attorney is meaningless in the case of a person who

does not feel inclined to practise spiritual disciplines or pray to the Lord of the Universe, but is on the other hand prone to follow a life of licence and intemperance, and who, when another protests against his conduct, replies—"Why? Have I not surrendered myself to the Lord? What can I do if He makes me act in this way? If He wants, why does He not change my mind?" This kind of giving the power of attorney is for deceiving others as well as one's own self. It prevents a person from attaining to his well-being in this world as well as in the next.

#### *The Final Word about the Power of Attorney*

This matter may be more clearly understood if we discuss it from another standpoint. Granted that you have given your power of attorney to the Lord, and that there is absolutely no necessity for you to pray to Him or practise any form of spiritual discipline. But if you have really surrendered yourself to Him, you are bound to feel His grace night and day in your heart of hearts. You will be made to think that you were going to be drowned in this limitless ocean of the world and that He has saved you out of His infinite mercy. Just

consider how much of love and devotion will this thought call up in your mind. Your heart will be filled with gratitude and love, and you will be forced to think of the Lord and take His holy name. Is it necessary for any one to ask you to do it? Certainly not. Even a ferocious creature like the snake feels grateful to its protector, becomes domesticated and does not hurt the members of its protector's family. Is your heart so mean and vile that you will not be filled with gratitude and love at the thought of Him who has taken your charge in this life as well as in those to come? If you think you have given Him the power of attorney and at the same time find that you do not feel any pleasure in offering your prayers to Him, then know it for certain that neither have you really given Him your power of attorney nor has He accepted it from you. Therefore do not deceive yourself any more by thinking that you have surrendered yourself unto Him, and do not on any account attribute the stain of your vicious acts to Him who is ever free from sin and impurity. If you do that, you will only be inflicting great harm and misery on yourself. Remember the Master's parable of the "Brahmin who killed a cow".

*Parable of the Brahmin who  
killed a Cow*

Once upon a time there was a Brahmin who laid out a beautiful garden with great care and diligence. He planted various kinds of fruit trees and flower plants. They

were growing luxuriantly and his joy knew no bounds. Now, one day as the gate happened to be kept open, a cow entered the garden and began to browse the plants. The Brahmin had gone out on business. When he returned, he saw the cow eating. Wild with rage he chased the animal and struck it with a club. Being hit in some vital part the cow died. The Brahmin was overtaken with fear. He said to himself, "What a pity! Being a Hindu I have killed a cow! And there is no sin greater than this!"

The Brahmin had read a little of Vedanta. He was therefore acquainted with the idea that the different senses of man carry on their respective functions through the power of the particular deities presiding over them. For instance the eyes see through the power of the sun-god, the ears hear through the power of the wind-god, the hands work through the power of Indra and so on. The Brahmin remembered these words and thought within himself—"Then I have not killed the cow. The power of Indra has moved the hands, and therefore it is Indra who is responsible for the killing of the cow." Taking shelter in this thought the Brahmin became free from anxiety.

In the meantime the sin of cow-killing approached the Brahmin and wanted to enter his body. But he sent it away saying, "Get away. There is no place for thee here. It is Indra who has killed the cow, so go to him." Hence the sin went

to Indra with a view to possess him. Indra, however, told the sin, "Just wait a little. I shall presently go, say a few words to the Brahmin and come back. After that you may get hold of me if you please." Saying this, Indra assumed a human form and entered the Brahmin's garden. He saw the Brahmin standing near by and looking after the plants and trees. Indra began to speak in praise of the beauty of the garden so that the Brahmin might hear him, and then with slow steps proceeded towards him. Indra exclaimed, "Oh, what a beautiful garden is this! The plants and trees have been planted with great taste, and each one is put in its proper place." Saying this he drew near the Brahmin and asked him, "Sir, will you please tell me who the owner of the garden is? Who has planted the plants and trees so beautifully?" Hearing this praise, the Brahmin was overwhelmed with joy and replied, "Well, it is mine; I myself have planted all these. Why not go round and see everything nicely?" Saying this, the Brahmin began to take Indra round, talking to him about the garden and showing him everything inside it. At last by mistake he came to the very spot where the dead cow was lying. Then, as if in a state of utter amazement, Indra asked, "By God, who has killed this cow?" Till now about everything in the garden the Brahmin had been saying, "I have done this, I have done this." On being questioned who had killed the cow, he felt

greatly embarrassed, and remained silent and still. Then assuming his own form, Indra told the Brahmin, "Thou hypocrite! All that is good in the garden has been done by thee; and this killing of the cow alone has been done by me! Is it so? Now look here, take on thyself the sin of cow-killing." Saying this Indra disappeared, and the sin too entered the body of the Brahmin.

### *Spiritual Growth and our Appreciation of the Master's Words*

Leaving aside the question of the power of attorney, let us now follow the trend of the original discussion. If asked, all the devotees of the Master will openly acknowledge the fact that with the flow of time they have, through his grace, been able to discover deeper meanings in his words than before. Again, there were many words and practices of the Master the meanings of which we could not at all grasp then. We merely heard and saw them in an indifferent mood without realising their significance. But now we are filled with astonishment to find wonderful meanings and imports in them all. The Master used to tell us, "Things will come to pass in due course. You will understand them in due course. Can you get fruits the moment you sow the seed? First there appears the sprout, then it grows into a small plant, then it becomes a big tree, and next it yields flowers and finally fruits. Just like that, Truth will be known in course of time. But you have to persevere. It will

not do for you to give up striving.  
Just hear what the song says—

O Brother, cheerfully stick on to  
the path,

You will achieve your end slowly in  
course of time.

\* \* \* \* \*

Have in you unflinching devotion to  
the Lord.

Give up hypocrisy and cunningness  
Through service, worship and sub-  
missiveness.

Is the Lord realised easily?

*Wanted Tenacity in Spiritual  
Practice*

The song over, the Master used to say—"If having faith in the Lord you persist in the path of service, worship and submissiveness or humility, you will achieve everything, you will certainly be blessed with His vision in course of time. But if you give up striving, your progress will stop then and there.

"There was a man who with great difficulty used to save some money out of his pay by small instalments. One day on counting his hoard he found that he had laid by a thousand rupees. He was beside himself with joy, and

thought, 'Why should I continue to serve any more? A thousand rupees I have saved, what else do I want?' Saying this, he gave up his job. So limited was his capacity; so poor his ambition! He became puffed up with pride for what little he had, and began to look down upon every one. But how long does it take for a thousand rupees to be spent away? Within a short time it was over. Then thrown into misery and distress the man began to hunt after jobs. It will not do for you to be like this man. You have to wait patiently at the Lord's door, and then only will you achieve your goal."

Further, while singing the second line of the song—"You will achieve your end slowly in course of time" he would say abruptly, "Away with it! Why 'slowly in the course of time?' One should never have such a sluggish devotion. Make your mind strong and say, 'Just now will I achieve my goal; just now will I realise God.' Is it possible to realise Him through sluggish devotion? No, never."

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## THE COMMUNAL TANGLE—I

**I**NDIANS are by common agreement a very religious people. In fact, the influence of religion on our life is so great that some satirists have caricatured the Hindu as one who even sins piously. We have always been proud of the purifying influence which our religion has on our passions and our motives, and on the sense of restraint and moderation it imposes on our daily activities and thoughts. We often speak of it as the vital principle of our life, which gives the clue to the mystery of our cultural survival in spite of unparalleled calamities in the past. We believe that we are invulnerable and our life as a people assured as long as we preserve the integrity of our religion, even as the giant of the fable whose life was safe so long as the bird in whose body his soul resided could not be killed.

But it seems, however, there is a tendency in some quarters to doubt the propriety of this age-long adherence to religion, in view of certain social complications of modern India that are generally traced to a religious source. It is being increasingly felt by many that religion, as forming the basis of communal feeling, is making itself felt more and more as a hindrance in the way of India's progress towards national solidarity. The Hindu and the Muslim, the Sikh and the Christian are often more particular about preserving the integrity of their own cultural heritage, centering round their respective Prophets and scriptures, than in creating a common tradition which all alike may share with pride. Each is suspicious of the others and regards with horror the prospect of being absorbed by rival religious cultures in the

imposing name of a united Indian nation. They, therefore, look at every move towards union with a suspicious eye, and would not consent to any forward step in India's political life until what they consider to be their communal claims are satisfied and their cultural isolation is supported and ensured by a political framework. Whether an administration based upon such principles can effectively function or not they are not disposed to consider as long as they feel assured that the recognition of those principles will sufficiently safeguard their communal interests. And what is worse, the suspicion and hostility of the brainy sections are now and then vividly objectified through the ignorant masses who break out into bloody communal riots of the type which Bombay witnessed a few weeks back. Religion, it is said, is at the basis of this mentality, but the religious minded do not ordinarily take this charge very seriously. But when grave breaches of the peace occur and men indulge in wild orgies of murder, loot and incendiarism under the ostensible name of religion, no man, however pious, can help seriously reflecting on the charge laid at the door of what he cherishes most in his life, at least with a view to examine whether such allegations are built upon any solid foundation.

The significance of the communal tangle cannot be adequately realised unless we view it in its historical perspective. The present form it has assumed is only a complicated manifestation of a tendency inherent in the line of cultural evolution that India followed in the past. In countries outside India, predominant cultural

groups were aggressively iconoclastic in their dealings with less virile groups with whom they came into contact. They knew of only two ways of dealing with them. If the lesser groups were not ethnically different and a racial fusion with them did not go against the sentiment of the superior group, the former were forced to abandon their own cultural peculiarities and taught to conform wholly to the customs and beliefs of the latter. In this process the two became wholly blended into one group leaving no vestige of the differences that separated them in the past. But if the disparity in point of culture was very great, and the racial features provoked extreme abhorrence in the mind of the predominant group, it was rather a process of extermination than one of wholesale absorption that generally used to be adopted. But India followed a method that was different from both these in tackling with similar situations. Cultural groups, whether higher or lower, were neither wholly absorbed nor exterminated, but they were allowed to live on as before, following their own customs and worshipping in their own fashion. Higher cultural groups were brought into closer association without however being allowed to fuse together completely owing to the rigour of the rules of endogamy, while the groups that were looked upon as belonging to inferior cultural and racial strain were kept at arm's distance and allowed a mere vegetating existence. They were all knit together under one loose bondage, viz., the recognition of the Brahmin's spiritual and social supremacy and a theoretical adherence to the Vedas which most of them however were prohibited from reading. Common pilgrimage centres, festive occasions, mythologies and the like further streng-

thened this union, but there never operated any force which threatened the cultural integrity of the different groups. The theological notions about the duties of Varnas and Ashramas, the various ideas of purity and impurity, the more or less strict practice of endogamy, the absence of any false missionary zeal of the modern type, the vitality of guild organisations and the governmental recognition of social compartments—all checked the tendency on the part of the stronger groups to swallow the less virile, and thus helped to perpetuate those innumerable social corporations all loosely united together under the Brahminical hegemony.

Though the people were organised into separate social groups, there were certain factors which worked in ancient India preventing the different communal interests from coming into open clash with one another. In the first place, there was the Law of Karma and Transmigration, which the Smriti writers interpreted as meaning that a person's birth in a particular Varna (social order) or Jati (caste) is determined by the qualifications produced by his thoughts and actions in previous lives and that his Swadharma or 'natural' duty in the present life is therefore to follow the occupations and customs of the group in which he has taken his birth. The pursuit of Swadharma was conceived as an unavoidable condition for one's well-being, both spiritual and material, in the life to follow, and any breach in its observance was threatened with the severe punishment of hell and a degraded and miserable embodiment in a future existence. While this view was generally shared and did exercise a powerful influence on the conduct of people, it is however incorrect to say that there were no cases of transgression of duty. Indeed we come across Brahmins

following the duties of other castes, like fighting, governing and carrying on certain forms of trade, but still, though they were not condemned or stigmatised for this, it was never considered honourable for them to follow such occupations except in times of national calamity. But the Brahmin's occupation, namely, priestly work and teaching were jealously guarded by law and custom, and no other caste encroached upon them under any circumstances. The Varnas other than the Brahmin were, comparatively speaking, loose in organisation. Though there were old Kshatriyas of pure descent like the Kurus and the Panchalas, any powerful fighting tribe could obtain the status of Kshatriyahood if they accepted the Brahmin's supremacy and undertook to patronise and protect the Dharma. So, too, the occupations of the Vaisya and the Sudra were not so mutually exclusive, as is often conceived, especially in view of the fact that the various castes and Jatis of the Sudra Varna were entitled to practise handicrafts like carpentry, chariot-making, smithy work etc., which were more or less akin to the traditional occupation of the Vaisya, namely, business and cultivation. But the Sudra had his special occupation which no one encroached upon, namely, domestic service in the households of the higher Varnas. The various forms of business and industry which Vaisyas and Sudras practised were guarded by trade-guilds from the encroachment of the members of other occupational castes. Every form of trade and industry was under the control of different trade-guilds or Srenis, which were closed corporations of the caste that followed the particular occupation, and when these guilds were powerful it was practically impossible for any outsider to encroach on their caste professions. Besides, during those

periods when stable governments were functioning in the country, the kings considered it their duty to see that the various Varnas and Jatis followed their occupations without any breach by way of omissions and encroachments. Thus, though it may be a mistake to put it as a rigid and axiomatic truth that a Varna always followed its particular occupation to the exclusion of all others, there was none the less a consensus of opinion regarding the exclusive right of certain people, recognised to belong to certain castes, to the unmolested pursuit of particular professions. Any competition in respect of these professions was not tolerated by the prevailing theological beliefs or by the state or by the trade organisations. Hence, although the people were organised in exclusive groups, chances of competition and clashes of interest from secular motives were minimised and a more or less smooth functioning of the social system was assured.

It was into such a society that first the Muslim and later on the Western conqueror burst in. Profound as their influence was in the political future of India, still greater were the consequences of their invasion on the social system of the country. Taking first the Muslim invasion into consideration, it has to be remarked that possessed as the Muslims were of a revealed scripture, an organised priesthood, distinct cultural traditions and a high monotheistic faith penetrated through and through by a strong spirit of exclusivism, they refused to recognise the Brahmin's supremacy and the authority of the Vedas for the privilege of being dubbed a Kshatriya caste of India. Hence unlike the older invaders like the Greeks, the Bactrians, the Scythians and the Huns, they remained outside the pale

of the Hindu social system and never became the valiant defenders of the Hindu Dharma. With the passing of political power into the hands of the Muslim, the Brahmin lost his position as the educator of the conscience of kings, and the governmental recognition, patronage and supervision of the duties and privileges of the Varnas also ceased to exist. But the hold of theological beliefs and the influence of trade guilds were sufficient to keep up the system very much unmodified, although the absence of active enforcement of the Dharma by the State must have certainly led to mutual transgressions and encroachments of caste duties, and the consequent competition and friction between different communities to a greater extent than before.

The significant fact, however, is that while as a rule competition and hostility between Hindu communities themselves were still held in check, the communal situation began to take a modern turn with the advent of the Muslims. Since the Muslim would not recognise the Brahmin or the Veda, he could not be taken as belonging to a community like the rest and hence remained apart from the Hindu social system. The basis of their distinction from other communities was not simply the work they did in society, but the faith and the mode of worship they followed. They did not believe in the Karma theory or its social implications, and thought it their duty to bring all others into their faith and their way of life. Nor were they deterred by any of the Hindu scruples regarding purity and endogamy in their attempt to bring others into their fold. The Hindus, as we have noted before, had their own way of absorption, but it was a process which allowed the elements that were absorbed to maintain their distinct

individuality. But endowed as the Muslims were with a strong tribal feeling, they hated all people as well as all beliefs and customs that were foreign to their spiritual tribe, and endeavoured, especially under rulers noted for their piety, to bring the natives of the soil within their fold, taking care at the same time to see that the new converts were cut off from their previous cultural and historical traditions. Hence the Muslim invasion introduced a community that differed from the already existing ones not only in point of worship and beliefs, but also by its claim to increase its strength by taking in people belonging to communities outside its own. But during the period when the Muslims were the virtual rulers of the land, they did not ordinarily push on their schemes of conversion very vigorously, save under exceptionally religious sovereigns. The Government was in their hand, and they held it by virtue of their might. By increasing their numbers in the country they had at that time nothing to gain in political matters, since it was their superior organisation and racial vigour that gave them power in the land.

As regards the Hindus, except in the time of some liberal-minded rulers of the Moghul dynasty, they ordinarily lived out of touch with the Government, which they did not feel as representing their aims and aspirations. Since the prevailing systems of Government were absolute monarchies, the numerical superiority of the Hindus did not in any way assure them an adequate voice in the administration. They lived in a state of sullen hostility which occasionally broke out into rebellion in regions where powerful leaders arose. The determination of the Muslims to remain aloof from the rest of Indian society resulted in the

persistence of their character as conquerors and thus prevented the gradual eradication of the hostile feelings which the people of the land had towards them. But the Hindus did not realise then the serious consequences on their society of the Muslim's non-recognition of India's age-long tradition of allowing communities to live side by side without trying to swallow one another. Just as the Muslims themselves could not understand the possibilities of their claim with regard to the future politics of the country, the Hindus too failed to recognise at that time the consequences of diminishing numbers on the future of their society. The attitude of both the sections in this matter was dictated by the political conditions of the day. The cause of the Muslim's blindness, as we have already shown, was the strength of his own position, whereas the failure of the Hindus to perceive the importance of changing their attitude was due to the consciousness of the futility of mere numbers. The prevailing systems of Government were absolute monarchies, and the Muslims, being the conquerors, had the whole political power in their hands, irrespective of their numerical strength. Hence due to the very nature of the Government, the numerical superiority of the Hindus did not assure them an adequate voice in the administration. Insurrections were the only means for them to make their discontent felt, and whenever they got able leaders or felt the tyranny unbearable, they rose up in revolt only to be put down in the vigorous days of Muslim rule, but later on to triumph and gain political predominance with the decline of the martial ardour of the early Muslims. To put it briefly, the result of the Muslim invasion on the communal situation was therefore the beginning

of an era of competition between communities, and the creation of an aggressive community that insisted on keeping aloof from the rest and increasing its strength at the expense of others.

The establishment of British rule brought in a further change in the communal situation. The British rule, when it came into force, was highly centralized and autocratic, but it held out the promise of a future democratic government responsible to the people. In a democratic system of government, political influence goes with numbers, and Hindus and Muslims, both of whom had lost political power, found in the new system a fresh way of gaining control over the administration. With the gradual extension of the democratic system, they began to perceive more and more that numbers would determine the political power of a community in the future; and religion therefore began to assume a new importance in their eyes from considerations of its secular worth. Whereas the ill-will between the two communities in days gone by centred round the consciousness of being the conquerors and the conquered, religious differences now gradually became the more favourite basis of operations for politicians and power-grabbers in the communal warfare. The minority communities that stood aloof from Indian culture and accepted the principle of religious conversion, received a fresh impetus for their missionary zeal when they began to realise the political importance of numerical superiority. As for the Hindus, they did not believe in the spiritual efficacy of religious conversions, and what was more, up till recent times they even used to be quite unconcerned at the sight of their co-religionists passing into other communities. But having realised the

importance of religion in determining the political status of their community in the future, they began to perceive the necessity of putting a stop to further diminution in their numerical strength. Hence the Hindus have begun to talk about *Suddhi* and to seriously consider ways and means for the removal of those features of their socio-religious organisation which render them open to the attacks of other religionists. At the impending approach of democracy the Hindus who have numerical superiority in most parts of India are expecting political power to fall into their hands, while the Muslims who still remember their old role as a conquering people think that in the interests of their communal isolation it is necessary to prevent this passing of power, and even if it does, to put forward extreme communal claims that may frustrate or neutralise its effects to the extent even of rendering any government worth the name impossible. This feeling of mutual rivalry and suspicion has penetrated deeply into a large section of the intellectual and politically minded people of the country, bringing in its train a host of complications in our national life. For one thing, it has placed very great impediments in the way of settling the political future of India, but what is still worse, the communal poison that has penetrated into the brains of the country becomes an unbearable nuisance to all peace-loving people when it manifests itself through the masses in the form of virulent communal outbreaks. The harangues of communally-minded politicians and the incitements of communal newspapers have worked upon the passions and prejudices of the masses to such an extent that they are ready to burst into violence and bloodshed at the most trivial acts of folly. A procession, the sounding of music be-

fore a mosque, the slaughter of a cow or the beating of a street urchin for an act of rowdyism is enough to set ablaze the communal passion and render a locality unsafe for human habitation for some length of time.

From all this it will be seen that religion in the real sense of the term has very little to do with the communal mentality. The really pious Hindu or Muslim is not so much interested in communal warfare as the far-seeing politician and the selfish adventurer. Belief in God and aspiration for salvation do not at all imply that there should be hostility between different religious groups. The orthodox Mussalman may be anxious to convert others into his faith, but even he would not assert that communal riots or the obstruction of the country's political progress will assist his cause in any way. By spreading communal rancour he does not gain converts to his religion. Even forcible conversions, sometimes resorted to by Muslims in unsettled times, are of no avail, for the Hindu society has nowadays become liberal enough to take back those who have been converted against their will. The ordinary man in the street, too, being uninstructed in politics, and being also the worst sufferer in riots, gains nothing from communal outbreaks. But with the communally minded politicians, the case is quite different. Some of them are really sincere, and champion the cause of their community only with a view to assure its future well-being. Others possessed of less idealism are goaded by the thought of selfish gain. It is this type that gives forecasts of communal riots or places the responsibility for all untoward incidents at the door of others and pleads too much of their own innocence. The causes they attribute to these riots often reveal their own interest in fomenting communal

bitterness. For example it was suggested by professedly influential bodies that the recent riots of Bombay were due to the non-acceptance of the Muslim political demands by the majority community and the consequent uncertainty the Muslims feel about their political future. If this be so, these politicians have at least some interest in riots of this kind, since they consider them serviceable in pressing their communal demands. In fact politicians of this persuasion are centres from which communal poison is disseminated, their influence and activities always contributing to the strengthening of communal bitterness. Their exhortations which rouse up communal excitement find a favourable response in the mind of another class, namely, the rowdies and vagabonds of Indian cities. It is only when disorder and commotion prevail that they find themselves in their real element and

receive all convenience for carrying on their nefarious trade. Many of the worst features of India's communal conflicts result from the combination of both these classes, *viz.*, the selfish communal politicians and the loafers and rowdies of the cities. The Hindu as well as the Muslim, who is seriously concerned with religion and wishes to mould his life on the spiritual ideas embodied in the scripture, has nothing to gain from conflicts and mutual hatred. If religion has at all anything to do with communal bitterness, apart from what politicians and rowdies do in its name, this predisposition arises not from any flaw in the ideal of spiritual perfection which forms the most fundamental aspect of religion, but due to certain defects which have crept into its organisation and the methods of preaching and propaganda. We shall speak of this in the next part.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND THE MODERN OUTLOOK

*By V. Subramanya Aiyar, B. A.*

THE immortal Shakespeare says, "What is in a name? That which we call a rose, by any other name would smell as sweet." Perfectly true as this is from one point of view, a name considered from another standpoint is found to possess wonderful power. Though it would have made no difference whatever in the personality of the great Guru had he been called a Trailokyanath or a Devendranath, yet the name Sri Ramakrishna is the key with which to unlock all the charms that have endeared his personality to us. My object, however, on this occasion is not to recount all those charms

or all that the world has thought of him. During the forty-six years that have elapsed since he dropped his mortal vesture, many have expounded his teachings and his life, not only in India but all over the civilised world. And one like me cannot add anything new. And what is more, not having had the inestimable blessing of seeing him personally, I could do no more than repeat what others have said or written. But inasmuch as his *teachings* lend themselves to individual interpretations I have ventured to make a reference to them from the standpoint of the characteristic thought of our own times which

\* Substantive of a lecture delivered at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, on the occasion of the celebration of the 97th Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna.

is pre-eminently scientific. I shall not aspire to the far superior privilege of dealing with those other features such as are of a purely spiritual character, which may be outside the province of a scientific view, howsoever great a source they may be to us, of the highest delight. In other words my object is not to refer to whatever is a source of spiritual joy or satisfaction merely, but to deal with that aspect of his teachings that has a bearing on the search\* after Truth, in the light of modern thought.

It is usually held that Sri Ramakrishna was but a Hindu religious revivalist or reformer. This view is as untrue as it is true. He no doubt started as a Hindu, but he lived as a Mohammedan and a Christian at times. He was the first Indian teacher to realise in our day that the time had come for rising above sects and creeds, Samajas and denominations to a level in which one could be of all varieties of religion. He freed himself from the shackles of creeds and Samajas and followed Religion in general, which may otherwise be called Mysticism. The real mystic, while retaining the essence of religion, attaches little value to distinctions of external forms and rituals though he has his own methods of attaining to his vision or experience.

It is now often said that the Bhagavad Gita teaches Hinduism. Some even go the length of declaring that it teaches this or that sectarian view exclusively. But no greater injustice could ever be done to it. Sri Krishna says that all religions lead to Him though from different sides. He is teaching no particular religion, but Religion in general, which Sri Ramakrishna actually lived. The Gita nowhere

refers to Hindu, Vaishnava or Saiva Matam or Dharma. For, India's greatest need then was, as the entire civilised world's need now is, to lift its view-point from particular religions to Religion in general. Sri Ramakrishna was at no moment of his life under the delusion that any particular religion could ever be made universal though he held that Religion in its essence is universal. Has not Christianity, Buddhism, Mohammedanism or Hinduism been divided, sub-divided and modified in a thousand ways as no one form could suit all mankind? Such attempts at making particular creeds universal have been and are being resorted to with the result that untold misery has been caused. For every religion or sect thinks that it alone is blessed with the merit of being fit to be universally accepted.

What then is the difference between religions on the one hand and Religion or Mysticism on the other? So long as men are adherents of particular faiths, *i.e.*, Hindu, Christian, Mohammedan, Buddhist, or Jain, Vaishnava and Saiva, so long are their love and active service limited to their co-religionists. But when they rise to Religion or Mysticism, they learn to love all mankind alike, their love then knows no bounds. They leave the world of discord behind them. This then is Sri Ramakrishna's first message. Every religion has its function in life. Start with any religion, and rise above it to Religion or Mysticism.

Religion has no doubt been the best means of securing the highest consolation for the individual man in the midst of sorrows and sufferings. But this is only one aspect of it; for, the religion of a man necessarily expresses itself in his relations with others, his neighbours and the world outside of him. He has also a philosophy, right or wrong, re-

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\* This search may be unpleasant or pleasant.

garding the entire universe. His religious attitude often makes or mars his social relations. And we know how Religion contributes to morality, its greatest strength. But this has its own limitations. Nevertheless this public aspect is more often overlooked, emphasis being laid on the other, the individual or private aspect in that it gives one inward satisfaction. The latter view cares not what becomes of the world so long as one's inward peace is secure. But this is only one half of Religion. Unless a person of this kind shuts himself up in a cave and starves himself to death, the other half of Religion will assert itself, the moment he seeks food from what is outside of him. And it is the latter, the social and moral aspect of Religion, that specially demands our attention in our day.

The Hindus as a body are a most religious people. It is said, "The Hindus eat religiously, dress religiously, drink religiously, bathe religiously and even sin religiously." Nevertheless the Almighty has sent to no other people of the world so many plagues, pestilences, wars and invasions, the consequences of which can never be better described than has been done by Arjuna, which is so familiar to us all. God seems to have chosen India specially for eternal suffering and endless servitude, as Sri Krishna once remarked to Uddhava.

Hinduism is said to be free from the vice of aggressiveness and to pride itself on not being a proselytising or a militant religion. But its valour finds vent in mutual quarrels between members of its own fold! No two groups of men can hate each other more bitterly than any two sects or cults of this faith. Instances are not wanting in which highly cultured sectarians do not

hesitate even at the present hour to vilify each other in the public.

Nor are the other great religions in any way better. History impresses upon us nothing else more strongly than the truth that more human blood has been shed and more inhuman cruelties have been inflicted upon man in the name of religion than in that of any other cause. Two thousand years of Christian training and two thousand and five hundred years of discipline in the most ethical of all religions, Buddhism or Confucianism, have not been able to soften the savage in the breast of the Europeans in the West or of the Japanese and the Chinese in the East. Human sacrifices are still offered to the God of War on ever increasing scales. Islam is younger and the blood in its veins is much warmer. It is no wonder that it has also played and is playing its part likewise.

In spite of all that may be said in favour of Religion as a source of moral discipline, every sect has helped the exploitation of ignorance by intelligence, and faith has often been made a cloak by the more knowing. Let not the followers of Dr. Gore, the famous Gifford Lecturer of Edinburgh, lay the flattering unction to their souls that the modern degenerate forms of Krishna and Sakti cults are found in India alone. What has the Dr. Gore school to say of their Khlystic creeds or of their enlightened conscience that delights in lynching the coloured man? Great theologians like the learned Dr. Otto of Germany have been seeking to establish peace on earth by organising a world's religious congress. But can it succeed if men still seek to establish the superiority of one religion over another? To many in the modern world, Religion is only another name for war or discord.

Lastly, if we turn to the question, how far do religions reveal what is Truth, the insuperable fact stares us in the face that as intellect advances, religions not only multiply but also beat a retreat, because irreconcilable differences arise. The theological dogmas of every religion and of every new sect are driven from pillar to post by the onslaught of scientific knowledge, so that nation after nation is attempting to relinquish religions, wholly or in part. Russia's attitude is too well known to need any description. And the greatest question of the day is how shall we know which religious experience or vision or knowledge is the highest Truth? Truth is the tribunal before which not only Science but also Religion is arraigned, however much Religion may plead the special privilege of private judgment and seek to avoid the public court of reason. The latest philosophers and theologians have contrived to bring about an amicable settlement, by setting up two separate standards of judgment: the one known as "Truth-value" for scientific subjects, and the other the "Aesthetic" or "Feeling" value for religious subjects. All the same, religions are being weighed in the balance and found wanting, especially because religions have lent themselves to be made an instrument for acts of the gravest injustice and cruelty, and because they fight shy of "Truth-value". Could we still, some critics ask, believe that it is the one chosen path to God, though it may be readily admitted that it has a real function to discharge in primitive life? This is what one of the most modern thinkers, A. N. Whitehead, says regarding religions in general: "During many generations there has been a gradual decay of religious influence in European civilisation. Each revival touches a lower peak than its predecessor and

each period of slackness a lower depth. The average curve marks a steady fall in religious tone. In some countries the interest in religion is higher than in others. But in those countries where the interest is relatively high, it still falls as generations pass."

Such being the religious outlook, we turn for a moment to Politics which seems to be a source of greater attraction to men than Religion. While a common religious belief helps to unite individuals into small groups for common good, it is found that it fails to effect the unification of several groups into society, and the need for a higher outlook is then felt. Politics, though it does contribute to the welfare of large aggregations of men better than religion, yet is not without its drawbacks. Political groupings for purposes of common good, fail to achieve their object when humanity at large is concerned. Politics, however refined, cannot be divested of its association with the natural instinct of self-preservation. And Politics also invariably means in some form strife and war.

Seeing that Religion and Politics fail to secure for man all that he seeks in these days, he turns, when his intellectual awakening is sufficiently advanced, to Science which has also a twofold aspect: (1) Its practical value in manipulating Nature's forces and (2) Its helpfulness in the investigation of Truth. We shall see how far Sri Ramakrishna's teachings have a scientific interest in them. It is with regard to the latter aspect that his teachings have a significance or value. So far as the former aspect is concerned we can never be too grateful for the blessings of the various discoveries, especially such as have contributed to the alleviation of human suffering. We need not dwell here on all the wonderful achievements

of Science, which every educated man knows. We have only to observe that remarkable as they are, they have been not less productive of evil. What Science has done may well be put in the words of one of the most well-known scientific thinkers of the day, Bertrand Russell who says: "In the name of science we revolutionise industry, undermine family morals, enslave coloured races, skilfully exterminate each other with poison gases. Recent inventions have increased the power of attack much more than the power of defence.....the most intelligent classes in the scientific nations are dying out... Equality, like liberty, is no more than a nineteenth century dream."

When disappointed with Religion as the best means of attaining social including moral amelioration, some men as indicated above seek their refuge in Politics or Science. And when Science and Politics, owing to their limitations, fail to secure all that they aspire for, they fall back upon Religion again. Such men either oscillate between these two or feel perplexed. There are, however, some others who tell us that a combination of Science, Religion and Politics is what is required. However judiciously such a mixture be made, it cannot bring in all the satisfaction a modern man seeks. If past history is a guide for the future, we shall find all of them sharing the common defect of inability to check the sorrows and sufferings caused by factors unknown or unexpected, and beyond man's control. And the special remedies that religions usually prescribe for them are reserved for the world after death, the promises of which world do not appeal in our times to most of our brethren actually starving or otherwise groaning with mental or physical pain. Neither does an intellectual person seek æsthetic delight in Religion, when he knows its mani-

fold drawbacks. The cultured citizen of the modern world too does not seek peaceful satisfaction in the old moral codes based on the pleasure or the displeasure of unseen gods and unseen demons. Who does not know that it is the righteous man that often suffers most and that it is the moral nations that are subject to the greatest trials? How many modern men bear all this patiently relying upon the old saying that the sufferings of the virtuous are a delight of the gods? And eminent biological scientists\* tell us that in the modern struggle for existence, it is not the old moral code that helps one to survive. Worn out standards they say, must make room for better ones.

Now, turning to the other, the second or the Truth-seeking aspect of Science, we find that our Guru recognised, as well as any the most intellectual among us, that with the advance of the spirit of enquiry into Truth, which is also the aim of Science, there is no retracing of steps; for the old order changeth yielding place to new. He felt that Reason or Buddhi is no insignificant factor in life. It makes all the difference between a fool and a wise man. He knew that it would one day challenge Religion itself and seek the highest satisfaction or bliss in the goal of reason i. e., Truth. He knew that the time was coming, as has been indicated in Sri Krishna-Uddhava-Samvada, for asking whether what is called religious sense or mystic experience or vision is Truth. When God himself was actually seen and touched and felt, he was asked, "Art Thou Truth?" There can be no more misapprehension about

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\*For instance, Sir J. Kelly is no believer in the ethical principle that one (individual or nation) when smitten on one cheek should turn the other to the enemy. And in fact is there even one in the modern world that follows it?

the function of Reason or Buddhi. For, it is by Buddhi that the highest is reached and it is in Buddhi alone, as Sri Krishna himself exhorts Arjuna, that one should seek refuge.

Rational discrimination on which is based Science is as much the handiwork of God as religion is. If religions are attacked by Reason, it must be because God intends that thereby the follies and fallacies of religions should be corrected or exposed. In fact, in defending themselves or in justifying their attitude religions only appeal to Reason as the supreme judge. It is needless to point out how frequently we find that our inmost feelings mislead us. Religion deludes itself when it thinks that what it feels must be the final Truth and keeps Reason at arm's length. The modern philosopher's arguments of knowledge by identity appear equally defective. For, it is a question whether there can be any knowledge at all in real identity.

As every one knows, while Science enables man to control Nature's forces and to turn them to his own account, it is yet far from reaching the ultimate Reality. Its results and its theories, though considerably in advance of Religion in its search after Truth, are yet unreliable inasmuch as they *vary* every day.

Now if neither Religion nor Science, nor Politics, nor the Ethics of our day fully satisfies the man with the modern outlook, there must be something lacking in them. It is this deficiency that Sri Ramakrishna seeks to supply.

What Sri Ramakrishna aims at is not only That, the understanding of which makes things yet unknown understood, but the attainment of which brings to man all that he desires. The scientist, on the other hand, is often elated with his achievements on the

way, and rests on his oars, imagining the achievements to be of more value than the end, and labouring under the delusion that the ultimate recedes like the horizon, as he seeks to approach it. Certainly this end will remain as distant as ever to the scientist unless he pursues knowledge with a determination to stop not till the goal is reached, as Sri Ramakrishna has put into the mouth of Swami Vivekananda.

The respective positions of Religion, Science, and Truth are best pointed out by Sri Ramakrishna himself thus : To attain Truth or perfect knowledge, the "Upaya" or the means consists of (1) Sadhu Sanga or the company of the wise, to enable one to know what to look for and value in this world ; (2) Iswara Chinta or any religious attitude of Bhakti ; (3) Higher Iswara Chinta or the mystic attitude of Visvasa, *i. e.*, universal love, by seeing God in everything ; (4) Vichara of the first stage which deals with the knowledge of the phenomenal or the seen world, *i. e.*, Asat, as he calls it, which is the field of scientific enquiry of modern times ; and (5) Vichara of the second stage which pertains to the truth of the noumenon or unseen world or "Sat", as it is called. This is perfect knowledge or the Highest Truth or Samadhi.

Though Religion undoubtedly prepares the way for the attainment of Truth, yet it is Vichara alone that leads directly to it. This enquiry into Truth is naturally preceded by Religion, Science and all the knowledge and all the experience that man can gain in life, *i. e.*, in the perceptual or the phenomenal world. None of them can be ignored, though Russia is making the experiment of ignoring religion, failing to realise that a society consists of persons at different levels of culture, and that religion appeals best to such of them as have the tem-

perament only to be led. Evidently Russia took no lesson from the history of Buddhism which gradually declined to the level of Mahayana and of Heruka Vajra cults. That nothing in this world can be ignored, if Truth is to be attained, is again taught by Sri Ramakrishna in his parable of the Bel fruit. Though what we relish most is the kernel of the fruit, yet when our object is to ascertain the weight of the whole fruit, we must weigh, besides the kernel, the seeds and the shell, though the latter may not be good for eating. When we wish to know the Truth, of the entirety of existence, we cannot reject the knowledge of the seeds, shell or fruit of Religion, of Science, or of any other knowledge of the phenomenal world, though they do not contain the final Truth in themselves. He adds: So long as one cherishes contempt (Ghriṇa) for anything, hesitation or shyness (Lajja) in seeking knowledge or cowardice (Bhaya) in pursuing it, one cannot attain the highest Truth. Lastly our Bhagavan says: "To Rama who wished to renounce the world as being the Asat, Vasishṭha said, "When all is Brahman what is there to give up?" This is Sri Ramakrishna's second message to the modern world. Everything, be it Religion, Science, Politics, Economics, or anything else, however insignificant, has a place in the world of true knowledge. He that omits anything cannot attain perfect or ultimate Truth.

Did Sri Ramakrishna know anything of modern Science to which reference is made by us here? If not, how could he have seen the bearing of it on religion or how could he be said to have got at the whole Truth? If he attained Brahmanjanam, it must be said that he reached it through Religion, ignoring Science. Further, his Brahmanjanam is suited for recluses like him. It makes

one unfit for the world with its modern outlook. Such may be some of the thoughts likely to cross our minds.

Science, no doubt, leads man from a lower truth to a higher truth. But the pursuit has to be continued. What is of greater consequence really in Science is its method, as is well known. And what Sri Ramakrishna also values is the discipline needed for the pursuit of Truth and the determination to reach the goal. In fact, in his method he is as rigorous as the greatest of the scientists of our day. Repeatedly he said, "Test me as the money changers test the coins. Test or verify before you accept me." Is there anything greater than the principle of verification in all Science? Again he said, "A Bhakta is sometimes a fool and is duped. But the seeker should never fail to test the truth of his knowledge." We leave it to the scientist to say whether anything could be more rational. Such discipline, as Sri Ramakrishna requires, Science can give only when the determination to reach the end is combined with it. Both these are acquired through the harder path of Yoga, of which our Guru was a perfect master. We do not refer to the Yoga for attaining the Siddhis which is discountenanced by our teacher. True Yoga is no end in itself. It only sharpens the power of Reason (Buddhi) so as to enable it to undertake Vichara. True Yoga is a preparation for enquiry in the same manner as scientific discipline is. But what science lacks at the present moment is the determination to get to the end, which Yoga supplies. A Buddhi so disciplined and so determined can unravel the mystery of the Mysterious Universe of Sir James Jeans or can solve the riddle of the Unseen World of Mr. A. S. Eddington with far greater certainty. And though the later develop-

ments of Einstein, and Max Planck's discoveries are sought to be undervalued from a philosophical standpoint by authorities like Sir H. Samuel, yet these discoveries of Relativity and Indeterminism, leading to the abolition of causation and of matter as such, could be seen to be nearer the Truth as taught by Sri Ramakrishna. In so far as Science is a pursuit of Truth, it is impossible for modern philosophy and for Brahma Vichara under modern conditions to make any headway without a knowledge of Science.

What would you learn if you reached the goal of Truth? Sri Ramakrishna replies in a parable. When a man wishes to reach the terrace, he has to mount up the steps, leaving each step behind him. But when he reaches the top he sees that the steps are of the same substance as the terrace. When we reach the Goal, Brahman, all the means that we use and all the Universe is found to be only Brahman. This is not Pantheism. Europe has developed as yet no concept corresponding to Sri Ramakrishna's Brahman.

His teachings are like a pyramid. He taught religion according to tastes and temperaments to those that wished only to be led, as Swami Vivekananda put it. He initiated into mystic faith those that could take a detached and a wider view of life. He gave training in Yoga to those few that intensely thirsted for Truth and possessed the determination to reach the goal. Lastly he taught disinterested Vichara to such microscopic few near the top, as possessed the sharpest reason or *Buddhi*. Among his disciples only Swami Vivekananda was found fit for this path; for he instructed only this disciple of his in the great *Ashtavakra Sambhita*. And those who seek Truth for its own sake are necessarily imbued with the

scientific spirit. The apex is the Truth, the one which is variously named.

Let us for a moment turn our mental telescope to that most distant apex, the Mount Everest of this knowledge. If, as Sri Ramakrishna says, everything is seen as the ultimate reality or Brahman at the apex, when one reaches it, what grief, what perplexity what confusion could there be\*? Whom can man hate, whom can he exploit and defraud, with whom can he quarrel or wage war? Whom can he strip of his gold, or whom can he deprive of his bread; whom can he enslave? Whom should he flatter or fear? What thing or being and what knowledge can he despise? All men, all creatures, all things, all thoughts, all knowledge, this "Sarvam" is Brahman.

Does this knowledge render us unfit for the world? Our Guru Maharaj asks us to tie up in a corner of our kerchief or cloth the Truth of Brahman and to enter the world. We shall then never fail to achieve what is reckoned as the highest or universal good.

It is not the attainment of mere theoretical knowledge that is the goal of this enquiry after Truth or Brahman. Knowledge gives power. Theoretical Science precedes practical achievements. Knowledge is ever pregnant with the practical. Why should we think that the knowledge of Brahman alone is devoid of practicality?

Whether we be workers in the fields, or wage earners in the streets, pupils or teachers, judges or jurors, merchants or doctors, soldiers or sepoyes, rulers or subjects,—whatever we may be, and wherever we are,—at the dining table, or on the field,

\* यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूद्विजानतः ।  
तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥

(ईशा—७)

on the bench or at the bar, in the forest or in the prince's palace, in the peasant's cottage or in the market—let us keep this knowledge of Truth tied up in a corner of our cloth. And we shall achieve what man has not been able to achieve till now in this world, and what all men long for most intensely. This is the third message of Sri Ramakrishna to the modern world.

To put the whole into a nutshell: To one embarrassed in life by the modern outlook, the Prophet of Dakshineswara would say: "Whatever be your standpoint, Religion, Science or Politics; Ethics, Aesthetics or intellectual advancement—neither any of these singly nor all or many of them jointly can be of avail in solving the problems of mankind as a whole so as to give general or permanent satisfaction, *unless you add to each of the standpoints a knowledge of the highest Truth.*" What gives vitality to each of them is this factor of Truth. And it is the lack of this that makes them inadequate, disappointing

or perplexing. Since the highest Truth comprehends everything, even atheistic movements, nothing is hostile to it or outside of it. But if we cannot reach or even get a glimpse of this Truth, let us tie up in a corner of our cloth at least the key that opens the door to a view of that knowledge. And that key is the thought of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, which is symbolised in his name. It will help one to cross the sea of life, despite the tosses that may threaten to overwhelm one there.

Remembering that what the modern outlook lacks is the requisite kind of determination to pursue Truth to the very end, may we meditate, as often as we can, not only on his name but also on these priceless words of his: "O Mother, here take back Thy knowledge and Thy ignorance (which Thou hast given), Thy purity and Thy impurity, Thy good and also Thy evil Thy virtue and Thy sin; but when I said all these to Mother, I could not say: 'Take back Thy truth and Thy untruth.' All these I could return to Mother, but *not truth.*"

## WAS THERE A UNITARY KARMA DOCTRINE ?

*By H. D. Bhattacharyya, Darsanasagara, M. A. B L., (P. R. S.)*

*(Continued from Page 20)*

**L**ET us follow a bit the fortunes of the various conceptions of Karma in philosophy, religion and popular belief. It would be convenient if we label the different views as personal-mechanical, vicarious-mechanical, theistic and material accidental. The first two roughly correspond to the autonomous function of the moral law, the third to the religious view and the last to magical function of material things and events.

As is natural, the personal view is the most logical and most widely held. But there were considerable divergences of opinion regarding the kinds of being whose actions produced moral results—in heaven and hell there were different types of beings working out their moral destinies, and speculations were diverse as to whether all such beings suffered the consequences of their action or whether these places were only places of enjoyment of the actions

of other types (generally human) of existence. A difference seems to have been made regarding human souls enjoying these places an account of merit or demerit and the natives of these regions, generally gods in heaven, who might inadvertently give offence to a sage and be cursed into mundane embodiment. But the whole thing was vaguely conceived, as sometimes the grossest treacheries in heaven would go unpunished and thus give rise to the saying, oft-quoted in Bengal, that what is sport to the gods is sin to mortals; and at other times the gods would feel the inferiority of their own position and seek a sage to get enlightenment in order to be saved. There is no doubt that the anomalous position of the gods was due to the fact that in course of centuries the conception of their nature and origin underwent radical alteration, and they were successively held to be eternal, created in time (*devayoni*) and deified on account of their austerities or virtues. Except in theistic speculations, their dignity seems to have deteriorated a good deal and they became involved in the general dissolution of the world as well as personal dissolution after a longer lapse of time as compared with the lives of men. They could be weakened by non-offering of customary oblations and they in their turn retaliated by withholding the rains and other blessings from men.

But whatever be the results of action in heaven or hell, all earthly actions of every type of being bore their moral fruit, and not only men but lower animals and gods who had taken human form were subjected to the moral law in different ways. Regarding the gods embodied there was some divergence of opinion, for although they sometimes suffered the consequences of their cruel deeds, take for example the case of Rama who as Krishna paid the penalty

of killing Bali treacherously by being killed in the latter birth by Bali's son reborn as a hunter, they were generally exempted from the operation of the moral law in respect of actions done in furtherance of the object for which they took shape on earth, and even when they had to be born on account of a curse, they generally went back to heaven at the end of the period of their suffering—the earth supplying the same kind of field of enjoyment to them as heaven and hell did to human beings. It goes without saying that the creative, preservative and destructive activities of the Supreme God similarly bore no fruit in spite of the fact that they brought happiness and misery to His creatures. Now, it is this ideal of fruitless action that the sage has been advised to follow in the Bhagavad Gita, and if men cannot claim a right to be exempted from the operation of the moral law, they may act without desiring for the fruits of action or they may dedicate the fruits of action to God and thus escape the consequences of their actions. It appears then that it is not Karma as such that binds but Karma performed with desire, and desire is a property which does not belong to the soul as such but to soul as involved in Prakṛiti.

But here again we are on debatable grounds, for we have other instances where the soul has been described to be inactive by nature, and actions with or without desire have been all ascribed to Prakṛiti alone—the only action properly belonging to soul being contemplative activity whose operation is wholly immanent in the soul and which has no transient effect. The typical example of this attitude is Jadabharata who ceased to take interest in activities of all types from birth lest he should be involved in the cycle of re-

birth. Popular thought went to the opposite extreme, and held that even where no question of mental factor arises, it is possible to reap the fruits of action by simply performing the appropriate bodily action. The hunter who dropped accidentally a Bilva-leaf on a Sivalinga after fasting the whole day in the forest got his reward all the same, although he never intended any stage of the worship of the benign deity. It is probable that the different views were intended to provide different types of reward, and the tradition of formalism in worship made it possible to hold that even where only the formal conditions of good action were fulfilled some merit was bound to accrue, not to talk of actions that are performed with good intention but not successfully carried through, which bring about a better embodiment and facilitate further spiritual progress in the next birth. The sages had to accommodate the popular demand in two ways namely, first by conceding that actions might clear off the impediments to true knowledge and secondly by postulating that for the Karma-margins a gradual liberation (*Kramamukti*) was possible. By those who held that attainment of heaven was salvation nothing further was considered necessary, but the spiritually advanced posited a further stage to be won by knowledge, which was not an abode of the departed good but a condition of the released souls. Heaven and salvation are not identical according to the sages, and an aspirant after the former was simply retarding the progress of his soul by false allurements. It is apparent therefore that moral action ended in a sort of paradox so far as the enlightened were concerned, for they never suggested that for final release such action was of any help whatsoever even when they conceded grudgingly

that it might prepare the soul for the enlightenment that saves. It is by going beyond good and evil that the true destiny of the soul could be achieved, and all actions, irrespective of their goodness or badness, had a tendency to keep the soul in bondage. The Karma-margins had never suggested that easy action could have any saving value and had advocated austerities, penances and sacrifices; but even this strenuous life of discipline was discountenanced by the wise, and they oriented the human mind away from the gods and their heavens to the self and its isolation. The help of the gods was not available in a matter that was entirely personal to the striving soul, and man was thrown entirely upon his own spiritual resources for personal redemption. When the gods were themselves supposed to be subject to the law of moral action, it was useless turning to them for succour. The only friend of man is his Dharma which accompanies him at all times, and even this Dharma was not identical with saving knowledge.

In fact, the autonomy of the moral law could be developed only at the expense of the authority of gods. Not only were the lesser gods useless in the attainment of spiritual benefit but even the Supreme God could not alter the destiny that man had sown with his own actions. Like a calf finding out its mother, one's Karma was sure to find one out even at the end of a *Koti Kalpas*, (innumerable ages), for the seeds of moral actions, unless burnt up by spiritual insight, were indestructible and would fructify in some realm or other to bring merited reward or suffering to the doer of the deeds. The next corporeal frame of a departing person would depend upon how his life just closed has been lived, and even if it should so happen that a merciful Pro-

vidence would occasionally bring about a dissolution of the whole world (*pralaya*) to give temporary rest to tired souls involved in ceaseless transmigrations, this would not alter a jot or tittle of what the souls have to suffer for their past actions: the cycle of creation would start exactly from where it had stopped and the suffering souls would begin again their predetermined voyage of life to complete the suffering they had earned. Man is the architect of his own fate for good or evil, and every birth is a reminder that there is a balance of merit or demerit to be worked off by enjoyment.

The emancipation of the law of morality from theocratic control was achieved through the doctrine of the efficacy of rites and Mantras preached in the Brahmanas. It is certain that when gods were originally approached for favour there was no doubt in the mind of the worshipper that they could really grant boons by their own free will. But when the idea entered into his head that it is not the will of the gods but the coercion exercised on them by the faultlessness of the sacrifice or utterance of the Mantras that brought about the desired results there is no limit to which human pretension could go. Even the materials used in the sacrifice could be imagined to be carriers of moral destiny; but when imagination did not go so far, it had no difficulty in postulating that the gods were like telephone attendants at the central exchange joining destiny to action, without the power to refuse connection though capable of delaying to some extent the joining of fruition to deeds. In extreme forms Karma was supposed to operate without any kind of divine aid or hindrance, and elaborate rules were laid down as to what action brought what results in the next birth.

But it is easier to get rid of the gods than to understand how an autonomous moral law operates. The major systems summarily rejected the heretical views associated with some of the contemporaries of Mahavira and Buddha that everything attains perfection in course of time or that it is chance and not personal will that determines the embodiment. But they were themselves not unanimous about the operation of the autonomous moral law. Buddhism, for instance, started the theory that as personality is a mere aggregation which dissolves at death it is illogical to suppose that in order to satisfy the moral law the same person must act and suffer. It is true that Buddhism was never consistent on this head, for it not only gave a series of Birth-stories (Jataka) of one and the same Buddha and endowed Goutama Buddha with memory of these past lives but also told stories of *Pretas* (spirits) who were suffering the consequences of their evil deeds; but still the major tendency was to saddle another being with the fruits of one's own action. Hindu theories strenuously opposed this double injustice of extinction of personal merit and accrual of unmerited suffering (*kritapranasa* and *akritabhayupagama*), and it is only popular thought that latterly admitted the possibility of enjoying the fruits of other people's action: even then the continuity of the self was never challenged. The fact that Buddhist and Upanishadic speculations were not far distant from each other in date lends colour to the supposition that while in the former Karma energy was dissociated from personality and was conceived as an impersonal force which could pass on from one individual to another, in the latter it was linked up with personality and affected the destiny of the same individual at

different stages: in Buddhism Karma energy could act transcendently in relation to the agent but in the other religious systems it was supposed to act immanently. In the Jaina system Dharma and Karma were regarded as different, the latter being regarded as material in character. It is not improbable that the terms Sukla (white), Krishna (black), etc., used in connection with Karma, as also the later theory in the theistic schools that Karma is inactive by nature and requires divine efficiency to get into matter, are remote echoes of the Jaina theory of Karma and Lesya.

There were other difficulties still. A single life is a series of good and bad deeds, and if the law of moral action demands that each action should have its own appropriate fruit, some method must be devised of marshalling the maturation of the fruits of different actions. Do men enjoy, like Yudhis-thira, the fruits of bad action first and then begin to enjoy the fruits of good action? Do they then return to this world to begin once again their efforts to attain salvation through spiritual insight? Or is the fate of the departing soul determined by the dominant type of act, good or bad, and the recessive type is simply overwhelmed? That would mean that a balance is struck between the good and the bad deeds of a person and the subsequent fate corresponds to the surplus of good or evil left. A reference to the speculations on the subject shows that there was considerable difference of opinion regarding the matter and it was held (1) that every action produced its own results which had to be enjoyed separately, (2) that the dominating type of action alone determined the character

of the next embodiment and the weaker type was totally suppressed, (3) that if there were a slight admixture of bad action with good, a minor expiatory rite was all that was necessary to counteract the evils of the bad action (e.g. of the sin of killing animals in a sacrifice) and (4) that the fruits of bad actions were only temporarily suppressed and would mature at a distant time.

There were again difficulties regarding the determination of one life by another. Would all the actions of a previous life be exhausted in the next following or would there be left over some surplus to be worked off in the life following next or later still? How in that case would the actions of the life just previous be worked off? Would not the balance accumulate from life to life? If the results of actions of one life are not spread over many lives, how, on the other hand, would the Vasanas continue? A man reborn as a cow forgets all human instincts but when later on he is reborn as a man he remembers those instincts again: this would not be explained if Vasanas cannot skip several births. Cutting across all philosophical theories, again, there was a popular belief that it is the last thought of the dying person that determines the embodiment—that it is not how we live but how we die that matters in the long run, and that therefore it is incumbent upon us to make our exit out of the world in as gracious a manner as we possibly can. Interpreting this as the attainment of spiritual insight at the moment of death we may admit the validity of this view, but it was never meant that the death-bed wish was anything of that sort—it was a wish like any other wish and produced not salvation but embodiment.

*(To be continued)*

# SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA, SANNYASIN AND TEACHER

*By Sister Devamata*

## III

The story is told that a great sage once came to the Temple of Dakshineswar on the Ganges, and when he prayed before the sacred image in the Shrine, the whole Temple shook with the fervour of his prayer. So it seemed when Swami Ramakrishnananda conducted worship. As he intoned the holy texts, such pulsating ardour of devotion swept out from the Shrine on the waves of that chanting voice, the very walls of the monastery seemed to tremble. At Mylapore he did not always perform Puja. Sometimes out of courtesy he would pass the privilege to a visiting Swami, or he would let Rudra take it. Rudra was the Brahmacharin who served him, and as the eldest son of a Brahmin widow, he was carefully trained in the rites of worship.

When the Swami himself took it, he would call for his Chuddar, throw it around him with a wide gesture, and stride into the Shrine, erect and stately as a sovereign. There was, however, no arrogance in his kingliness. It was the natural outcome of his lofty heritage. He was the disciple of a mighty Master, son of the great Mother of the Universe; could there be a more royal tradition to shape life or bearing? "Divine Mother does not like us to call ourselves Her servants," he said to me more than once. "We are children to Her, not servants. Always think of yourself as Her child."

Swami Ramakrishnananda was a worshipper by right of birth. From

his earliest years he had the influence and training of an orthodox Brahmin home. His father was a learned Sanskrit scholar, deeply versed in the Scriptures, rigid in observance of the traditions and religious usages of his caste, devout and austere. It was natural for the son to follow the same habit of life. If, under the more radical influence of the Brahmo-Samaj, he reacted against it for a brief period, he returned to it with renewed ardour after he came in contact with Sri Ramakrishna. The devotional fervour of the Master kindled a flaming fire of devotion in the heart of the disciple. He took his place once more before the altar in the Shrine, and neither scoffing nor ridicule could drive him from it. His less orthodox brothers bantered him for his old-fashioned, bell-ringing ways, but he remained unmoved. Not that he considered rites and ceremonies of primary importance; he knew they were only secondary, but they were to him hallowed channels of religious expression and as such should be preserved and honoured.

It was not strange that with this strong bent of mind, the Swami should deplore the secularising trend of the modern world. "At present no one really worships the Divine Mother," he exclaimed one day. "We are all worshipping the little mothers of this world and have forgotten the Divine Mother. We all want these little finite pleasures and do not care for that infinite pleasure. We are like the bird hopping about on the tree, while the other bird

sits calm, serene and motionless. The tree is full of luscious fruits and the bird, seeing a specially tempting one, thinks, 'Oh! If I could only taste that one!' So he goes near and even though he may have to thrust his head through thorns, he takes a bite; but alas! the fruit is bitter. So he tries twenty or thirty and finds them all bitter. He is just about to give up, when he happens to taste one that is sweet. This gives him new expectation and he starts again to look for another sweet fruit. After tasting ten or twelve bitter ones, he gives up and joins the other bird on the top of the tree. So we try to find our happiness in wealth, in the little mothers of this world, in power, in name and fame, but when we discover their bitter taste, we turn to God and worship Him."

While the Master was living, the disciple made himself His personal servant; when the Master had gone, he made himself the servant of His memory. Year after year Swami Ramakrishnananda guarded and served the Sanctuary where his Master's ashes and image were enshrined. His brother disciples wandered and came back, made pilgrimages and returned, but he went the quiet round of the monastery at Baranagore, devout and prayerful. He carried water from the Ganges for the Lord's bath, he swept and cleaned the Sanctuary, he polished the Puja vessels and performed the Puja, he cut the vegetables and cooked the offering. He lived as the servant of the Shrine and of the house. Yet he was still the disciple of a mighty Master, the son of the Mother of the Universe; and as he stooped by the Ganges side to fill his water jar and lifted it to his shoulder, there was something in him which stirred unspoken respect in the servants who jested with him, taking him to be one of them.

If Swami Ramakrishnananda was a conservative in his mode of worship, he was essentially a liberal in his religious conviction. Tolerance, universality of outlook, freedom from all prejudice, these formed the keystones of his thought structure. Religion he defined as "the struggle of spirit against matter," and he gave welcome to whatever helped in the struggle. When some one came with words of condemnation on his lips, I heard him say: "Never find fault with any form of religion. Differences are all in the external customs. That which makes up the external is the shell. It may be hard and rough and perhaps not to our liking, but it holds a valuable kernel. The kernel of every religion is God. To whatever religion a man belongs, he has to worship the same God. The essential parts of religion are everywhere the same. It is only in the non-essential parts that differences are found. Various religious beliefs and doctrines are merely partial reflections of Truth, but because they have that little reflected light of Truth in them, we take them to be the whole Truth. Religion may be defined as giving God His due. 'God alone is the proprietor of this universe, God alone is the proprietor of myself'—recognising this and then giving up all to Him, that is religion. Wishing to keep all for yourself is irreligion. Throw away the idea of 'me and mine,' give up all to God—this is the essential of every religion. This is what Christianity teaches, this is what Mohammedanism teaches, what Hinduism and Zoroastrianism teach, what every religious sect teaches."

On no subject did the Swami talk more frequently or more at length than that of Deity. If a visitor began to read a secular book or a newspaper he would chide him, saying, "You can do that

anywhere. Here you should try to think on God." His own mind was saturated with God thought. He exemplified in himself what he once said to me, "A man who has realised God must keep on realising him all his life." He believed that "to realise God is the aim of every human being whether he knows it or not." "No man," he said "who has not true love toward God can be religious. Religion begins with attraction to God and no soul will ever find real satisfaction until he has reached God. All bondage comes to an end when man realises Him. As a matter of fact all men are loving God, for every man loves eternal life, all knowledge and all blissfulness, and these are God. But few men know they are loving God. They are like a man who has been hearing of mangoes all his life but has never seen one. He may eat a mango and not know it, unless some one comes and tells him. So all men are loving God; but only when some one comes and tells them, do they know it. If they can once realise that God is the most lovable being in the whole universe, they will learn to love Him consciously; all their thoughts will flow toward Him and they will be naturally religious."

"The realisation of God cannot be attained in a haphazard way," the Swami continued. "There is a regular method. First you must hear, then you must understand what you hear, and from understanding you go on to realisation. You must know the light is there, otherwise you may go in the opposite direction to find it. Next, you must hear from a teacher how to go to it. Then you must understand clearly just what it is; and when you have understood, realisation will come. So long as it does not come, you must go on discriminating and trying to understand."

The bigness of his thought swept him for a moment into silence, then he went on: "It is true, the average man is not ready to perceive Truth. You must be Truth to know Truth. You must live it, and make it a part of your experience; otherwise you cannot know it. The finite can never know the infinite, but we can have some intellectual perception of what it is. If that were not the case, why should we be so eager to attain it? One must get everything from inside or from Nature. Nature is God's book, and blessed is the man who knows how to read it."

## SANKARA FROM THE LEGENDS OF KERALA

*By Prof. K. Rama Pisharoti, M. A.*

**K**ERALA is a land of religions and philosophies. It was the meeting place of all Indian religions and faiths and creeds, and of all the most important religions of the world. There found a congenial soil not only the orthodox Hinduism, both Vedic and Brahmanic and the various schools of Hindu Philosophy—Mimamsa, Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita—but also the hetero-

dox religions of Jainism and Buddhism. Besides these Indian religions, there also flourished the alien religions of Christianity, Judaism and Mohammedanism. Further, the Malayali conceptions of religion and philosophy must most probably have been influenced not merely by these varied religions, orthodox and heterodox, Indian and foreign, but also by the Grecian, Roman,

and Chinese schools of philosophy, for these various foreign nations have had their thriving colonies at Oranganore, the great emporium of trade in ancient India. Besides, it is also worth while to point out that the hoary Vedic religion was brought and superimposed over what might be termed the Dravidian religion which had its own gods and cults. And at least from the dawn of the Christian Era, these various creeds and cults and faiths and religions have been living side by side amicably and peacefully without producing any sects and sectarian prejudices. Mutual toleration and mutual accommodation—these have been the watchwords of our religious life. The old Vedic religion, the oldest to be introduced in the land, became modified by and assimilated to the Saivite cult. Thus modified, it continued to exist side by side with Buddhism and Jainism. Such appears to have been the situation till the 5th century A. D., when Buddhism became predominant, only again to be supplanted by about the close of the 7th century, when Hinduism received its last tributary in the introduction of the Vaishnavite cult. It was into such an arena of religious life that the blessed seer Sri Sankara was born, for then was Astika Dharma, though not actually in danger, at least lost in a bewildering mist of faiths and creeds and cults. Then there was 'Dharmasya Głanih' and so came the incarnation.

Enough has been said to show that the age of Sri Sankara was an age of great religious activity. Thus he was not born in a *philosophic vacuum*. He is the son of his age and his philosophy is the result of the conditions of the age in which he was born. I am one of those who believe that for a proper understanding of the seer and his work, he must be studied with reference to his age and the conditions of his age—a

fact that is true of every other great man in every department of human activity. This is a truth that cannot be forgotten and students especially will do well to take this to heart.

One of the two dates that the history of religion in Kerala has kindly preserved for us is the date of the destruction of the shrine of Varahamurti at Payannur, who is the patron deity of the Nampudiris who belong to the Panniyur Gramam. There was a religious schism brought into the Vedic camp through the powerful influence of Buddhism and the result was that the reformers broke the sacred idol. This incident is said to have taken place in 565 A.D., if any credence may be attached to the Kali chronogram 'Cittacalanam'. This rash deed of the reformers in the Panniyur Gramam led the orthodox party to quit their ancestral settlement in North Malabar, and seek in Central Kerala a new home more congenial to the pursuit of their orthodox religious practices. One of the families that then migrated was the Kaippilli Mana, the home of Sri Sankara, and this family settled itself down at Kalati on the banks of the river Curnika, or the modern Periyar. And here it was in their new home at Kalati that the great seer was born in 738 A.D., as our tradition would have it.

Siva Guru, the father of Sri Sankara, was for long not blessed with issue. Following the usual custom obtaining even today amongst the orthodox, the pious couple repaired to the sacred shrine at Trichur which is the premier Saivite temple in central Kerala, and offered prayers and did penance. Before long the God appeared to them in a dream and blessed them with an omniscient son. They returned home after the prayers were over, and in due course the lady conceived and in time gave birth to the divine seer. The fond

father performed all the religious ceremonies connected with the birth of a son and brought him up in a way worthy of the glorious traditions of the family. But he was not long allowed to enjoy the pleasure of his son's company, for death snatched him off when the boy was but five years old. The boy conducted the ceremonies connected with the death of his father and for one year performed the Diksha ceremony as does every Nampudiri even now. The father being dead and the family being not in affluent circumstances, there was some difficulty felt to conduct the Upanayana ceremony of the boy Sankara. Thanks, however, to the help rendered by the relatives, the ceremony was conducted at the proper time. The boy continued his studies under his Gurus at home. According to our tradition Sankara continued at home till his sixteenth year and he left it only after this year.

While the non-Malayali traditions would make him as going out of his native land for the sake of his education, our traditions are unanimous in maintaining that the great seer had his full and complete education in the land of his birth, both religious and secular. Indeed there was no need for him to go out of his native land for purposes of education, because the 8th century witnessed a great revival of intensive Sanskrit and Sastraic studies in the land of his birth, and it brought forth a distinguished array of poets and dramatists and philosophers, the most important among them being the brilliant Prabhakara, the eminent dramatist Kulasekhara and the distinguished poets Vasudeva, Lakshmidasa and Lila-Suka. A study of the history of Sanskrit Literature in Kerala during this period would clearly show that Sri Sankara had no necessity to go out of his native land in search of education. And the

natural force, simplicity and directness of his writings clearly attest to the method of Sastraic teaching that is peculiar to Kerala, the outstanding characteristics of which are an intensive thoroughness and clearness, features which obtain amongst the Pandits there even today.

The particular circumstance which appears to have necessitated the going out of Sankara was not the needs of education but the desire to get himself ordained. Then, as it is now, the Malayali Brahmins cherished an innate dislike to get themselves ordained. It was their cherished convention not to enter the fourth stage of life before passing through the three other stages of life. It was, they believed, against Dharma to accept Sannyasinhood early in life. Consequently the Vaidik leaders refused to ordain Sankara, especially because they were then passing through an intensive revival of the Purva Mimamsa under the lead of the eminent Prabhakara Bhatta and were tempted to treat with suspicion all leanings towards Sannyasinhood, in which they could easily find some Buddhist tendencies. The result, therefore, of the trend of the times, aided no less by the force of a conservative tradition, was that Sankara could not get the dream of his life fulfilled in the land of his birth. He was forced to migrate to other lands to get himself ordained. This aspect is not emphasised in the life of the seer, an aspect that is borne out to a considerable extent by the circumstance in which alone he could get permission from his mother to enter the fourth Asrama of life. In the first place he got the required permission through an accident, almost tragic in character, and secondly on the distinct understanding that he would perform her funeral ceremonies. Thus, then, the singular reluctance on the part of the

Malayalis to get themselves ordained forced Sri Sankara to leave his mother-land. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to hold on to the view that Sri Sankara had his full and complete education, both sacred and secular in the land of his birth.

There is a non-Malayali tradition which makes the Acharya an illegitimate child, and some try to find support for this view in the opposition that the seer met with at the hands of his own kith and kin in the matter of offering a proper cremation to the mortal remains of his beloved mother. True it is that there was opposition; but this was not due to any reflections cast on his birth. It was entirely a conscientious religious objection to a Sannyasin offering funeral service to his departed mother. This was against convention, against practice, against the accepted religious code, in short against the immemorial Dharma as they have conceived it, and no wonder if the religious leaders refused to take part in the funeral rites conducted by the revered seer. Tradition says he did it all by himself. This is the basic point of the objection, and an ignorance of the same has led to the creation of legends not always calculated to enhance the greatness of the great philosopher.

Kerala traditions again make him come back to his native land to lay down his mortal remains. There is a consensus of opinion and tradition that the seer of divine wisdom lies buried in the spacious Matilakam, *i.e.*, the sacred enclosure round the temple at Trichur. There is a natural fitness in accepting this as the last resting place of the seer, because he was born through the blessing of the Lord enshrined there. And the exact site of the place has been marked out for the adoring posterity by erecting a flat over it carrying the symbols of Mahavishnu.

He was during his last moments accompanied by all his four disciples, Padmapada, Suresvara, Hastamalaka and Trotaka. After making his obeisance to the three Lords enshrined in the temple in an exquisite hymn where in both Siva and Vishnu are beautifully intertwined, he is described to have sat in front of the Vaishnavaita shrine and begun the last of his famous Stotras, the well-known Vishnu-Padadi-Kesam. But the seer could not finish the whole hymn; his tongue failed him just after beginning the 43rd verse, and after uttering the first two syllables 'Padma' the divine breath fled to a higher sphere. Padmapada took up the hymn and completed it. Thus passed away one of the greatest philosophers that India, rather the world, has ever produced.

The tradition of the seer's last days, as recorded here, is not unsupported by the tradition mentioned in Sankara-Vijayam. Madhavacharya says that Sri Sankara went to Sri Kailasa, the popularly conceived abode of Siva. In the light of the tradition mentioned here this account of Madhava is singularly true; for one of the names by which the premier Saivite shrine at Trichur is known is Daksina Kailasam or Kailasam as we term it. Madhava's account of Sankara's going to Kailasa is literally true in the light of our traditions; and this great chronicler of Sankara's life may well be taken as simply recording the traditions of death as current during his days, with this difference that the significance of the term Kailasam was mistaken.

Our tradition of the seer's last resting place is also borne out by another indirect piece of evidence. One of the premier Mimamsaka families in all Kerala is the Payyur Bhatta Mana or Patta Mana as it is familiarly called. This family produced in the

15th and the 16th centuries as well over a dozen scholars at the same time. The greatest of these, Paramesvara, styled *Mimamsa Cakravarty*, states in one of his works that he was descended from Mandana.

*Mandanacaryakrtayo yenadhiyanta krtsnasah*

*Tadvamsena mayapyes racitaradhya devatam.*

It is a very pertinent question to ask why the family of Mandana should have migrated from their Bengali home and come down to Kerala? The only possible explanation for migration is to be found in Mandana's becoming fixed up at Trichur on account of the necessity to be near the mortal remains of his beloved Guru. Our tradition says that Mandana or Suresvara, as he was called after his becoming the disciple of Sankara, was the first President Sannyasin of the *Etayil Madham*. I may here point out that there are, rather were, four Madhams established at Trichur, namely *Tekke Madham*, the *Etayil Madham*, the *Natuvil Madham* and *Vatakke Madham*, the first Presidents of these being the four disciples *Padmapada*, *Suresvara*, *Hastamalaka* and *Trotaka* respectively. The existence of these Madhams and their history are practically unknown to the non-Malayalis and are not referred to by any writer, even though these should have attracted the greatest attention. From what has been said it will be clear that the origin of the *Payyur Bhatta Mana* eloquently confirms the truth of our traditions regarding the last resting place of Sri Sankara.

The origin of *Bhatta Mana* as recorded by Paramesvara is interesting from other points of view also. In the first place this quotation directly controverts the opinion of that section of scholars who refuse to accept the identification of Suresvara and

Mandana Misra. The presence of this family in the centre of Vaidik clans further explains why the school of Prabhakara waned in importance in the land of its birth. The vigorous attacks made by Sankara, the existence of the family of Mandana and its necessary partiality to the school of Sankara, no less than the absence of a successor worthy of the intellectual calibre of Prabhakara, brought about the gradual decline of the Guru school of Mimamsa, but not before it did the work it was intended to achieve.

From what has been said it will be clear that so far as the present evidence goes we have every reason to assume that Sri Sankara has his mortal remains entombed in the sacred enclosure at the temple at Trichur, which is styled the *Kailasam* of the South. Apparently one objection may be raised against this view, whether dead bodies can be buried in temple premises. But an immemorial convention sanctions the burial of Sannyasins in the place of their death; and an insistent tradition will have it that the sacred enclosure in this particular temple contains the mortal remains of a number of distinguished Sannyasins, many of whom were the presidents of one or other of four Madhams established at the foot of the temple hill. If my information is correct, this practice of burying Sannyasins in temples was put a stop to only recently.

Coming to the period of the great seer, we have our own traditions. He is supposed to have introduced many innovations in the social life of the Malayalis and the grateful nation has commemorated the incident by founding an era, called the *Kolla Varsha*. From this and other evidences of an astronomical character it has been deduced that the great Acharya must have

lived between 788 A. D. and 820 A. D. According to a reading in the Sankaracharya Charitam, it may be assumed that the Emperor of Kerala at the time of the seer was a Raja Raja. It was however left to his successor Raja Sekhara to actively patronise the seer.

There is, indeed, a section of orthodox scholars who would assign Sri Sankara to a pre-Christian century, and they adduce in support of their theory the chronicles available in the five Jagad Guru Mutts elsewhere in India, such as at Badari, Sringeri, Kumbakonam; etc. We do not know how far these chronicles are authentic and how far they support the pre-Christian origin of these various Mutts. Even accepting the authenticity of these chronicles, still it does not appear very essential to assign the Adi Guru for this reason alone to a pre-Christian century. For no positive evidence has yet been adduced to show that all these Mutts have been founded by Sri Sankara himself. In the absence of this evidence and arguing from probabilities, one is inclined to believe that these all-Indian Mutts were traditional centres of Vedantic studies even from ancient times, and that what Sri Sankara did with regard to these was simply to convert them to the Advaita theory. Thanks to their continuous Vedantic tradition, they became with their conversion the chief custodians of the Advaita cult. This, I believe, is the relation that these Mutts bear to Sri Sankara. Almost similar but in one respect closer is the relation that the Madhams

at Trichur bear to the Adi Guru. We have no tradition which assigns to Sri Sankara the origin of these Madhams; but there is consensus of tradition which says that the four disciples of Sri Sankara were the first Presidents of these Madhams. These heads, it deserves to be pointed out, never tackle on to their names the very pretentious titles 'Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya etc., etc.' Putting these two together, one may reasonably hold that these Madhams came into existence only after the time of the Jagad Guru, because the principal disciples of the seer chose to live there and carry on and popularise the cult of their great master. These in due course became well-known centres of Advaitic studies and before long became richly endowed Madhams. The probable origins of the local Madhams and the tradition of a pre-Christian existence for outside Mutts yield a suggestion that Sri Sankara himself did not found any Mutt and that these have come into existence to commemorate the name of the great seer and to perpetuate his great teachings. This takes us to the end of our present study. Enough has been said to show that a study of the Malayali traditions has its own contribution to give in a study of the life of the great Jagad Guru Sri Sankarabhadrapadacharya. And in concluding this, I may emphasise one fundamental fact, namely, that no life of Sankara can be complete which does not take into cognisance the traditions current about him in the land of his birth.

## ETHICS OF THE UPANISHADS

By Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, M.A., Ph. D.

(Continued from last issue)

### (5) *The Nature of the Upanishadic Ethics*

**T**HE Upanishadic ethics is more comprehensive in the sense that it is not only the science of conduct, but is essentially the science of the purification and transformation of being. Ethics in this sense is an art of conduct, and as an art it prescribes various forms of discipline. This art is Yoga.

Ethics in this sense has the task of regulating the inner being to help it in attaining a transparent nature, of making it pure and receptive that it can reflect Truth as a mirror. This regulation is no scientific adjustment of values and claims. The conflicts of claims and counter-claims can be possible where the being is not transparent enough to feel the life of the whole and where the harmony of the spiritual life is not sufficiently established to embrace the absolute integrity. Ethics is, therefore, more an art of purifying and purging for equipping a person with that fineness of being required for the more sublime vision of Truth.

Since ethics is an art of life, it changes its nature and scope in the different stations in life, for they offer different prospectives of life and require different adaptations. Life is intensely complex and reveals different phases with their own intuitive meanings and serviceableness. It will reveal a lack of intimacy with life to insist upon the same type of conduct in every station of life. To insist on uniform conduct is to deny the richness, the different outlets of expressions and the

subtle movement of life. But through all its expressions life never loses the rhythm and harmony; for that is the keynote of life. Life is harmony. And whatever the form of expression may be, majestic or secret, it cannot deny the law of harmony. The cast may differ, but the fundamental tune is the same. And therefore stress has always been laid upon the purification of being that nothing may disturb the evenness, harmony and the rhythm of the spiritual life.

Professor Keith thinks that the Upanishads do not develop a scientific ethical code, and the Upanishadic Absolute leaves no room for human responsibility. The deity is all active through human beings, and therefore they cannot be blamed for what they seemingly do. And again he says, "Knowledge relieves man from worrying as to whether he has done wrong or right in any matter." "The emancipated self possesses autonomy; but it is not an ethical state, it is merely a condition of unhindered power, the ideal of a despot, the state of the man who goes up and down these worlds, eating what he desires, assuming what form he desires," (Vide Keith's *Philosophy of the Vedas*, Vol. II, pp. 586-87.)

Ethics in the Upanishads is relative to the stages of life, and there can be no absolute ethical code since the values which the stations of life set up are widely divergent. The Upanishadic ideal is transcendent wisdom which concerns pure reason more than practical reason, and in this sense the

science of conduct can only be relative. And between the ethical ideal of perfection and the transcendent wisdom, the Upanishads unhesitatingly chose the latter as the more rational pursuit, for Truth is more fundamental than value. Value attracts because of its gratification, Truth attracts because of its abidingness. And this is true in the Absolute. The value concept is not consistent with the Absolute. It is more or less true of the divided life of will, but will is the index of the life of concentration, but not of transcendence.

The Absolute is beyond all seeking and all moving. And in this stage the categories of moral life like duty and responsibility can never arise by the nature of the case. And therefore it becomes no disparagement or a shortcoming that the Upanishads cannot find a place for morality in the Absolute. The Absolute is supra-moral, and the claims and truths of personal life cannot dominate in it. The Upanishads are eloquently expressive of the quest of the Absolute, knowing which the mystery of life stands revealed; and therefore, they can accept ethics only as an art of life equipping us for such a consummation. The ethics of personality can serve us so long as the sense of duties and obligations are strong in man, but does not the conception conflict with the expression of the Absolute and bar from view the free and the spontaneous play of life not necessarily associated with value? What value can be set upon the eternal move and expression of life? Value is essentially a social problem, and can have no meaning in the free expression of Spirit. If the tension of human life is removed, the question of value disappears. Value and meaning are associated with the tension in society and humanity; and tension is created when

there is opposition and conflict, but spirit is clear of all tension.

Such a conception of ethics adds a greater dignity to it, for ethics is no longer the science of the valuation of conduct, but becomes the art of rearing up a fine being helping finer penetration. The ethics of mystic life is to find out the music of life, the unseen and often unnoticed music that life is associated with; for this helps better understanding and quickened perception. Such has been the demand in the life of the quest, and such an art is more helpful than ethics ordinarily understood for the great promise and undoubted privilege of wisdom.

Moreover, the fundamental conception of the identity of Self has the desirable effect of saving humanity from crude egoism, and establishing the social life upon a more secure and dignified basis. Morality lies more in eccentric move of life as opposed to the egoistic move. This eccentric projection presupposes expansive vision of reality, and the more an agent accepts the commonality of being, the more he is set up in a moral equilibrium. He sees no longer the world of claims and counter-claims, and adjusts the possibilities and privileges of life more harmoniously and more easily. The moral life, really understood, is not a life of gratification, of realisation of claims, but a life of gradual expansion and transcendence of claims. In fact, moral life is a transformation from seeking to service. It is more in the giving than in the seeking. If this expansion is taken away, morality remaining no longer morality, it becomes the gospel of gratification, and not the gospel of sacrifice. And so long as humanity has this yearning for gratification, ethics becomes almost an impossibility, and to this day even we see

the fruits of egoistic assertions. The harmonisation of rights and claims can only be set upon the understanding of identity.

The great claim of ethics, the realisation of the cosmic ends of humanity, is not possible unless the vision is widened, the being made more elastic and the egoistic chords cut off. Vision can alone give such a free and elastic being, and when duty follows wisdom, then alone it becomes spontaneous, and the clinging of the will to the self is displaced by the cosmic feeling for humanity. Wisdom allows expansion of being as its invariable effect, and this tells upon the practical bearing of life.

The basis of moral life lies in the sacrifice of the egoistic claims, and in this sacrifice lies the possibility of the great awakening to the reality. And in turn the glimpse of the expanse gives the life of sacrifice an attraction and an appeal.

When the sacrifice is the greatest, the reward in realisation is the highest. The Upanishads emphasise sacrifice in every stage of life, as the preparation for the great task of life is based upon sacrifice. But this sacrifice is the greatest in the life of the wanderer, where the demand is the complete restraint of nature and the object is the highest wisdom. Sacrifice as the basis of family and social life makes life grow in a spirit of fellowship, but sacrifice in the life of the wanderer makes life fixed in transcendence. Life is enjoyed everywhere; in one case it is enjoyed through the harmony of family and society, in the other case through the harmony of Nature and through the inward harmony of the soul.

Not that transcendence is not possible in the worldly life, but that complete absorption in transcendence is not possible therein. The consummation is reached when the transcendent consciousness continues in uninterrupted and unbroken continuity, but such continuity is not possible amidst the diverse claims of life, and hence in the case of the wanderer a complete sacrifice has been the demand. The harmony in human society and civilisation is often disturbed by discordant notes, because humanity has not fully outgrown the self-centred motives and purposes. But the wanderer is anxious to go deeper and feel the pulse of that harmony which runs through the heart of things undisturbed in its flow and uninterrupted in its music. It finally leads on to the kindly light.

The more inward the urge, the more altruistic is life; the more the core of being is touched, the more life's urge becomes cosmic and adaptation all-embracing. The eccentric adaptation is the root of ethical life, and this is possible the more life takes its bent towards the centre.

Yajnavalkya's sermon on the Atman shows definitely that when the relations of life are viewed in the superior wisdom of Atman, they become really welcome and delightful. It adds a new lustre to them. It gives a new attraction to them. It casts a divine hold upon them. The least sense of distinction takes away the absorbing interest that a man can have in sympathy and benevolence, for unless the satisfaction of widening consciousness follows, ethical adjustment does not become a reality.

*(To be continued)*

## OBITUARY NOTES

### Master Mahashaya

Sjt. Mahendranath Gupta, the celebrated author of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, familiarly known as Master Mahashaya, passed away on the 4th of June in Calcutta, at the ripe old age of 78. To the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna all over the world his demise is an irreparable loss, for he was one of the few surviving souls who had come into intimate contact with the Prophet of Dakshineswar and could speak with authority about his life and teachings. He met Sri Ramakrishna in 1882, and for four years sat at the feet of the Master, moulding his spiritual life under his direct guidance. He used to note down in his diary all the conversations and events that took place during his visits to the Master, and with the help of these notes he wrote his famous book, *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, perhaps the most popular work on the Great Master. In the original Bengali it consists of four volumes, and 'M', as he calls himself in the Gospel, was just engaged in bringing out the fifth volume when he breathed his last. Two parts alone have appeared in English, but they set forth all the most brilliant chapters of the work and bring the reader into intimate touch with the teachings and personality of the Great Master. No one who has read the work can fail to notice its dramatic effect and its vivid portrayal of the Master and the devotees who gathered around him. About this book the Holy Mother remarked that on reading it she felt that the Master himself was speaking through its pages. No better testimony is required than this to show how faithfully the author has

preserved the spirit of the Master's conversations.

Master Mahashaya was undoubtedly one of the most successful missionaries of Sri Ramakrishna's message. His great book, *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, has carried solace to thousands of world-weary souls, and as long as Sri Ramakrishna's name is remembered by mankind it will find a place of honour among the religious classics of the world. Apart from this book also, Master Mahashaya played a very important though silent part in spreading the message of the Master. He was the Headmaster of a school, and it was his regular practice during the days of his discipleship at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna to send to him all the best boys of the school, so that their lives might get transformed by the Master's influence. In this way, it was under M's direction that many among Sri Ramakrishna's young disciples came to him. After the Master's passing away, he along with a few other householder devotees supported and encouraged the young Sannyasins of Sri Ramakrishna to persist in the sublime life they adopted under the Master's inspiration. In later days also a good number of the young men who joined the Ramakrishna Order received their inspiration from Master Mahashaya and turned to the life of renunciation under his influence. Until his last day innumerable men used to flock to him, and the one topic of his conversation with them all was the Master and his message. Indeed he was full of Sri Ramakrishna, and no one who came into close contact with him could go without contracting great re-

verence for the Master. In the city of Calcutta he was truly a refuge for hundreds of world-weary souls, who resorted to his mild and godly company to assuage their spiritual thirst.

For sometime past he had been suffering from neuralgia. He was still attending to his usual daily routine and was recently busy preparing the fifth volume of the Gospel. On the 3rd of June he worked hard and saw through the proof-sheets of his coming book. In the night he got a sudden pain on his arm which gradually spread to his heart with fatal result. He spent a sleepless night and passed away on the 4th at 6 O'clock in the morning. His last words were, "Let Mother take me in Her lap". He fulfilled the important mission that was in store for him, and has gone back to his Great Master, in whose thought he was deeply absorbed all through his life.

We shall publish a fuller account of his life in the next issue.

### **Rao Sahib C. Ramaswami Aiyangar**

It is an irony of fate that simultaneously with the passing away of Master Mahashaya, we have also to record the demise of another great friend and worker of the Mission, namely Rao Sahib C. Ramaswami Aiyangar, familiarly known as "Ramu" among his friends and the monks of the Ramakrishna Order. A real Karma Yogin of the Gita type that he was, the Mission has lost by his death a veteran worker whose devotion to the cause of Sri Ramakrishna was excelled only by the humility and self effacement that characterised him in all the great work he accomplished in his life. The city of Madras too is poorer today by one of its distinguished citizens, whose name can be ranked among its first rate edu-

cationists and philanthropic workers. The Government had conferred on him the title of Rao Sahib and the Kaiser-i-Hind Silver Medal in recognition of his services in these directions.

Ramu was one of those young men who came into contact with Swami Vivekananda during his visit to Madras and was influenced by his life and teachings. Soon after the Swami left Madras he sent Swami Ramakrishnananda, a brother disciple of his, to start a Math in this city and popularise the principles of Vedanta in the light of the life and teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. Not long after the Swami's arrival in Madras, Ramu met him one evening on his way from College, and thenceforth for about fifteen years, which was the period of the Swami's ministration in Madras, he moved on intimate terms with the Swami as one of his most devoted disciples. He used to look upon the Swami as his Guru, and his regard and reverence for him knew no bounds. Under the Swami's influence his natural tendency for serving the poor and suffering received an impetus, and it took a definite turn when he began to organise works of public utility. First he had started a school for Adi-Dravida children and continued it for about seven years in spite of the opposition of his orthodox relatives and castemen. But the great work of his life was the building up of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, which is a child of his nurture, and which continued to receive his services as its able Secretary to the end of his life.

The starting of the Home, as recorded in his Reminiscences, came about as follows: One evening when he had gone to visit the Swami, they happened to talk among themselves about the lot of poor students in the city. The Swami, who always felt intensely for the poor,

said, "My dear Ramu, several boys come to me appealing for help. If our Math were as rich as some of the other Maths in the country, I would throw open the doors to these boys. With the poor means at my command I have already given refuge to one boy here, and even that I find difficult." The boy to whom he had given shelter was an orphan from Mysore whose parents had died of plague. In the Math the boy was finding it inconvenient to stay and prosecute his studies, especially because he could not be provided with meals in time for his College. So the Swami requested Ramu to arrange for his meal in some gentleman's house. Ramu did accordingly and made arrangements with some of his relatives and friends for the feeding of the boy, each house providing him with meals for a day in the week. A few days after Ramu saw a batch of four Andhra students sitting under a banyan tree in Mylapore, starving and helpless. They had come to Madras with the hope of help for prosecuting their studies, but could find none. Seeing their wretched condition Ramu made arrangements for their day's meal in his sister's house. When he went to see the Swami in the evening he narrated the story of the Andhra boys to him and added, "Swamiji, can we not start a boarding house on a small scale to help these boys?" The Swami remained thoughtful for a while and said a few minutes after, "Ramu, do you really believe that you can undertake such a task? Think well. You ran a school for Panchama children for seven years, and at last you had to give it up. Once you take up a work you must stick to it. What you propose now is a very difficult thing." Ramu replied that he felt confident that the undertaking would succeed if he had his blessing, and the Swami thereupon exclaimed, "Then, Ramu, it

is all right! If you have faith, it will work miracles."

"That was enough for me," Ramu remarks in his *Reminiscences*, "I felt the load on my heart already lifted. From that day to this I have never doubted, I never calculated, and I have never been anxious for the future. *He made everything easy*". Truly as the Swami had asked him to do, he never wavered from the great work he had undertaken, and as a standing monument to the steadfastness, faith and self-surrender of this remarkable man stands the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, a premier educational institution in the Presidency, that has for the past 26 years been a refuge for poor and helpless students. Although he was in service, he devoted most of his time and energies for the cause of this institution, and due to his whole hearted attention the Home rose from its very humble beginnings to its present position of eminence and popularity. He began the institution with seven poor boys in a small rent-free house given by a friend under the blessings and guidance of his revered Master, Swami Ramakrishnananda. He received sympathy and help from some of his close relatives and friends, but others, highly placed officials on whom he counted very much, threw cold water on his enthusiasm. They refused him help, thinking that he was only a young enthusiast and the institution a mushroom growth. Help or no help, Ramu persisted, and his efforts were in time crowned with success. Those who scoffed in the beginning became whole-hearted admirers and liberal patrons of the institution. The work rapidly grew by the munificence of his friends who were drawn to him by his sincerity and the ability with which he managed the institution. The Home has now completed its 26th

year, and it can boast today of its palatial buildings which can accommodate about 140 boys, most of them free boarders, its Residential School, its Industrial School and Workshop attached to it, and its Permanent Fund which has swelled to about four lakhs. The monthly expenditure of the whole institution comes to about Rs 3000.

"One can beg for others with pride," says Ramu in his *Reminiscences*, "but to beg for oneself is certainly humiliating". And if any one truly felt pride in begging for others, it was Ramu himself. He was a *veteran beggar*, who built this huge institution, not by his political influence or official authority—for he was only a subordinate officer in the Railway Department—but by the strength of his character, his tenacity of purpose, his delight in service, his capacity to win over the hearts of others for the cause, his devotion to his Master Swami Ramakrishnananda

and above all by his resignation to God, so characteristic of his Sri Vaishnavic upbringing and temperament.

He was nearly sixty when he passed away. For the last six years of his life he had been partly disabled by an attack of paralysis. In 1926 he lost the use of his right side by the first stroke, and although he never regained full control over his limbs, he used to move about till his last days with a little assistance and apply himself to the internal management of the Home with unimpaired zeal. On the 15th of June he attended a business meeting of the Managing Committee of the Home, and immediately after he got a sudden attack of paralysis and fell unconscious. For about fifty hours he remained in that state and passed away on the 17th at 8-50 P. M.

May his soul find peace in God whose service through the poor and helpless was his supreme delight in his life-time !

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Reopening of The Vedanta Society at Portland, Oregon

This centre was opened by Swami Prabhavananda in the early autumn of 1925 when upon the invitation of friends in Portland, Ore., Tacoma, Everett and Seattle, Wash., he delivered a series of lectures in those cities. In December of that year the organisation of the students in Portland was perfected and Swami Prakashananda came up from San Francisco to open and dedicate the centre. As a result of this great spiritual impetus the society grew steadily until in the year 1928 it was given legal status by incorporating it under the laws of the state of Oregon. In the summer of the year 1929 Swami Prabhavananda

saw the need for a larger field of service at Hollywood, Calif., and Swami Vividishananda was sent from India to take charge of the work at Portland. This work continued under his guidance until early in 1930, when because of the ill health of the Swami and financial difficulties the work had to be suspended.

A few of the ardent students of the society, however, continued their study of the Vedanta teachings during the year 1930 and 1931 and held regular weekly study classes in the public library building. The interest thus shown found a response when early in 1932 assurance was given by Swami Prabhavananda that the centre would be reopened under the leadership of

Swami Devatmananda, formerly of the Vedanta Society of New York City, who was soon expected from the east after a round of visits and lecture engagements at Providence, R. I., Chicago, Ill., Hollywood, Cal. and San Francisco.

To assist in the work of reorganisation Swami Prabhavananda came north from Hollywood, Cal. one week in advance of Swami Devatmananda. Swami Devatmananda arrived on February 11th, 1932 and on the following evening a reception was tendered him at the home of one of the friends of the Society, thereby giving him an opportunity to meet informally the students and friends of the centre. As the week progressed classes were organised under his direction, Tuesday evenings being devoted to the study of the Gita and Thursday evenings to discourses on Patanjali's "Yoga Aphorisms". These classes have been well attended by both new and former students.

A large and comfortable residence has now been rented in one of the best districts of the city to serve as a home for the Society and its leader. By rather strenuous efforts upon the part of Swami Devatmananda and those students who had time to devote to the project, the new home was renovated and furnished in time to hold the regular Tuesday evening class on March 8th. The new headquarters now have a spacious and tastefully decorated auditorium for the Sunday services and week day classes, an office room, a library room and a beautiful meditation room for the special use of the members of the Society.

As the regular activities of the Society progress, it is the earnest prayer of all the students that under the able and devoted leadership of Swami Devatmananda the centre will be re-vivified and will grow to fill a vital and permanent place in the work of the Ramakrishna Mission.

## General Report of the R. K. Mission

The R. K. Mission has brought out its sixth General Report which covers the period from 1928 to 1930. It traces the history of the Mission from the year 1897, when a Ramakrishna Mission Association was started by Swami Vivekananda, down to the present day; and points out clearly the distinction between Math and Mission, their respective funds, office-bearers, etc. As a sort of warning, the Report says in the Introduction, that "the mere use of the name of Sri Ramakrishna or Swami Vivekananda with any institution does not necessarily imply that it is managed or controlled either by the Trustees of the Belur Mutt or by the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission, or that the central organisation at Belur is responsible for their activities." The recognised institutions, directly under the control of the Headquarters, we find, were 83 at the end of the year 1930: 27 in Bengal, 2 in Assam, 5 in Behar and Orissa, 10 in the United Provinces, 1 in Delhi, 2 in the Bombay Presidency, 1 in Central Provinces, 18 in the Madras Presidency, 4 in Ceylon, 2 in Burma, 1 in Straits Settlements, and 10 in the United States of America. Five centres have been added in 1931, bringing the total to 88. For detailed description the Report classifies these into five groups: Section I, dealing with Math and Mission Headquarters, section II with Mission centres only, consisting of (A) Institutions of General Service and (B) Institutions mainly Educational, section III with combined Math and Mission centres, section IV with Math centres alone, and section V with centres outside India. Besides its own work of supervision, control and direction, the Headquarters conduct (1) The Ramakrishna Mission Charitable Dispensary at Belur, (2) Mass Education Work and (3) Temporary Relief Works. Short reports of these activities and of the works undertaken by the various centres of the organisation have appeared from time to time in these columns.





M. at the foot of the Bel-tree at Dakshineswar  
on February 23, 1927



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XIX]

AUGUST, 1932

[No. 4

## HINDU ETHICS

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अमानित्वमदम्भित्वमहिंसा चातिगर्जवम् ।  
आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्यैथिमात्मविनिग्रहः ।  
इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहंकार एव च ।  
जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम् ॥  
असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।  
नित्यं च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥  
मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।  
विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि ॥  
अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।  
एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥

Humility, unpretentiousness, non-injuriousness, forbearance, uprightness, service of the teacher, purity, steadiness, self-control ;

The renunciation of sense-objects, and also absence of egoism ; reflection on the evils of birth, death, old age, sickness and pain ;

Non-attachment, non-identification of self with son, wife home, and the rest ; and constant even-mindedness in the occurrence of the desirable and the undesirable ;

Unswerving devotion to God through constant meditation, resort to sequestered places, distaste for the society of men ;

Constant application to spiritual knowledge, understanding the end of the knowledge of Truth ;—this is declared to be the means to Knowledge, and what is opposed to it is the path of ignorance.

BHAGAVAD GITA, CHAP. XIII.

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

(Continued from page 85)

## THE MASTER IN BHAVA MUKHA

*How the Master's Spiritual Moods brought about Physical Modifications*

**A**S a matter of fact the Master appeared as a living embodiment of divine consciousness, as if the various spiritual moods and ideas (Bhavas) together got concretised into a definite shape and form visible to us. We speak usually of physical changes being brought about by changes in the mind ; and on rare occasions, we may come across this experience to a little extent. But we could never dream that thought currents could bring about so great transformations as used to be produced in the case of the Master. In the transcendental state (Nirvikalpa Samadhi) his ego-consciousness would be completely effaced, and at once his pulse, his heart-beat and all physical activities would come to a stop. Doctor Mahendra Lal Sarkar and others could not detect any working of the heart even on examining him with medical instruments.\* Not being satisfied with that, another Doctor friend touched the pupil of his eye and found that it did not shrink at all, as is the case with a dead body. Again, at the time he practised Sakhibhava, looking upon himself as a handmaiden of God, his mind got so completely absorbed in the ideal that the grace of womanliness shone in all his movements such as sitting, walking, talking, etc. Even Mathuranath and others, who used

to move with him day and night, would mistake him for a casual lady visitor. Many similar instances we have ourselves seen and heard of from the Master himself. And, in the light of all this, we are of opinion that the rigid theories of modern psychology and physiology require modification. Will people believe even if we speak of those incidents in the life of the Master ?

*The Master's Capacity to enter into the Thoughts of All People*

But the most wonderful thing we have observed in the Master is his capacity to move about in all the mental planes and to grasp any thought, great or small. He could enter into the innermost thoughts of all, young and old—of the worldly men, Sadhus, Jnanis and Bhaktas, men and women alike. He could further know by which path and how far a man had advanced in the spiritual realm and what were the practices necessary for him to proceed in the same path according to his previously imbibed tendencies and under the existing conditions of life. He could fully understand the spiritual status of a man and rightly prescribe for further progress. From our study of the Master, it seems as if he had already experienced in his own life all the feelings that arose and are likely to arise in the human mind—as if he remembered in detail all the stages he passed through in the course of the appearance and disappearance of each of those feelings in his mind. And it was

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\* This took place while the Master was living at Shyampukur, Calcutta, for the treatment of his throat trouble.

because of this that he was able to grasp and understand them and give necessary instructions in the light of his previous experiences when people approached him and gave out their feelings. This seemed to be true in all cases. Swayed by ignorance and attachment, buffeted by the troubles of the world and desirous of leading a life of renunciation and sacrifice, but unable to find out any means to get over the circumstances that stood in the way, when anybody would approach him with a sorrowful heart, the Master, as a rule, used to point out to him the right path. Not only that, he would often speak of the experiences he himself had under similar circumstances. He would say, "Well, then it was like this and I acted in such and such ways", and so on. Needless to say, on hearing the Master's own experience, the inquirer would come to entertain great hopes, and proceed along the path pointed out by him with much faith and enthusiasm. Besides, as a result of the Master's narrating the incidents of his own life, the inquirer would think how greatly the Master loved him. He would even tell him of his innermost thoughts. The point will be made clear if we give one or two illustrations.

*The Story of Mani Mohan's Grief for  
the Death of his Son*

A grown up son of Mani Mohan Mallick of Sinduriapati (a suburb of Calcutta) passed away. Mani Mohan came to the Master immediately after doing the obsequies of his son. Sad at heart, he saluted the Master and took his seat in one corner of the room. He saw that many devotees, both men and women, were sitting in the room, and that the Master was engaged in various holy talks with them. Soon after Mani Mohan had taken his seat, the Master's eye fell on him, and with a shake of his

head he inquired, "Well, why do you look so worried today?"

With a choked voice Mani Mohan replied, taking the name of his son, "He has passed away today."

Seeing old Mani Mohan's dishevelled hair and shabby dress, and finding his voice choked with grief, all those present in the room remained motionless and silent. They all realised that the deep sorrow and overflowing grief which stirred the old man's heart could not be checked by means of words. Still, feeling sympathy at his lamentations and weeping, they tried to console him saying, "This is the way of the world. Every one has got to die some day. What is lost cannot be brought back even with a thousand cries; therefore give up grief and bear the sorrow." Ever since the beginning of creation people have tried in this way to console men and women afflicted with grief: but how many hearts have been soothed thus? And how could it be so? It is only when our thought, word and deed are attuned that our words can touch others' hearts and call up thought currents similar to ours. But in our case such attunement is altogether absent. We simply say that the world is unreal, but in all our thoughts and actions we prove the contrary. Instructing others to look upon this world as a dream, we whole-heartedly believe it to be eternal and try to find out ways and means for living here permanently. How can our words then carry the same force?

All others were speaking to Mani Mohan in the aforesaid manner, but the Master, on the other hand, was listening to his lamentations without uttering a single word. Some were astonished to find the Master so very indifferent and even thought, "How hard-hearted and bereft of sympathy he is!"

After listening to the old man for some time, the Master passed into a semi-conscious state, and all of a sudden he stood up making a movement of challenge, and pointing to Mani Mohan he began to sing a song with a wonderful force :—

To arms! O man,

See, how death attacks thy house!  
etc. etc.

The heroic tune of the song and the gestures of his body, coupled with the fire of renunciation and strength radiating from his eyes, inspired new hope and enthusiasm into the hearts of all. All the minds were roused from the domain of grief and attachment, and were filled with a pure and divine bliss that lies beyond the ken of the senses and the touch of the world. Mani Mohan also felt this in his innermost soul, and forgetting his grief and sorrow sat still, calm and unruffled.

The song was over, but the atmosphere of the room became tense for a long time owing to the current of holy thought created by the Master with the help of the few words of the song. "The Lord alone is our own, and to Him let us offer our heart and soul. May He have mercy on us and bless us with His vision"—lost in thoughts like these, everyone sat still inside the room. After sometime the Samadhi was over, and the Master came and sat near Mani Mohan and addressing him said, "Alas! Is there any bereavement greater than that caused by the loss of a son? The reason is that it is born of the body. It is related to the body and the relation lasts as long as the body endures."

Saying this, the Master narrated the story of his nephew Akshay's passing away by way of example. The Master began to say all this in such a grave and sorrowful manner that it seemed as if he was again witnessing before him the

death of his relative. He spoke—"Akshay passed away. But it did not affect me in the least then. I stood by and watched how man passes away. I saw that the sword, which was in the scabbard, was drawn out of it. Nothing happened to the sword, it was the same as before, but the scabbard was lying still. I enjoyed the scene, laughed heartily, and sang and danced over it. Then they removed the body and cremated it. But the next day, as I stood there (pointing to the verandah lying to the east of his room and facing the yard of the Kali Temple), I felt a racking pain for the loss of Akshay, as if some one was squeezing my heart like a wet towel. Addressing the Divine Mother, I said, 'Mother, I am not concerned with my body, even much less with a nephew. But if such is my pain at his bereavement, how much more must be the grief of the householders at the loss of their near and dear ones? Art Thou teaching me that?'"

After a while the Master began to say, "Do you know? Those who hold on to the Lord are not overpowered even in the midst of the greatest grief. They regain their balance after getting a little tossed. But people with poor stamina are upset altogether and may even get drowned. Have you not seen what happens to the fishermen's boats when steamers pass in the Ganges? It would seem as if the boats were going to be capsized immediately—as if they could not be saved again. There are some that are altogether upset. But the large boats carrying a thousand maunds of cargo get tossed just a few times and again become steady as before. But they cannot help getting shaken a few times."

Remaining sad and sober for a while the Master commenced, "After all how long in the world does a man's relation

with his people last? In the hope of pleasures he goes to lead a family life. He gets married, begets children, the children grow, and then he marries them. Sometime it may pass on well this way. And, then, it may be one falls ill, another dies and a third one takes to evil ways. Cares and anxieties overpower him. The more his "sap" dries up the more he cries out in despair. Have you not seen what happens when a large hearth is lighted? At first the splinters of green firewood burn well. But then, the more they burn the more does the sap come out and collect at the end of the splinters like foam. And there it begins to boil and make various kinds of hissing noises. Such is the condition of the family men." Thus did the Master console Mani Mohan by speaking to him of the impermanence and unreality of the world, and of seeking refuge in the Lord as the only means of attaining true happiness in life. Regaining his mental balance, Mani Mohan also said, "This is why I have run up to you. I knew none else will be able to soothe mental anguish."

Noticing this unexpected behaviour of the Master we remained speechless and thought within ourselves, "Him we

considered to be hard-hearted and indifferent." Even the little acts of a truly great man are not like those of ordinary men. In all acts, great or small, we find proofs of his greatness. We thought, "Is he the same person who sometime back was in Samadhi or attained to divine consciousness due to which the throbbings of his heart came to a stand still? Is the Master the same person who has become exactly like an ordinary man in his sympathy for Mani Mohan's present condition?" Without paying any heed to the words of the old man, he might have said, "It is all Maya! This is a matter of no consequence." It is not that he could not do so. But had he given expression to his greatness that way, we would have known that whether great or anything else, he was not a teacher of men, a teacher of the world. We would have known that he had no capacity to enter into the feelings of ordinary mortals. And we would have said, "Had he fallen into the helpless state of weak mortals like ourselves, mortals attached to wife and children, we would have seen how he himself could have remained indifferent to what he calls the play of Maya."

## THE COMMUNAL TANGLE—II

**I**N the last number we pointed out that religion, in as far as it concerns itself with the spiritual evolution of man, has practically nothing to do with the communal clashes so common in modern India. The immediate occasion for the intensification of communal feelings is the impending approach of the democratic system of Government and the consequent anxiety of communally minded politicians to ensure a majority, failing which at least a strong

minority, for their respective social groups in the legislatures of the country. But still, it may be asked, what is it that has made religion the rallying point for this communal bitterness in spite of the claim, put in its favour, of being concerned primarily with the spiritual evolution of man. If the main purpose of religion is to teach reverence to God and devotion to the path of righteousness, why does it so often group men into exclusive camps

cherishing little good will, if not open hostility, towards one another? It is quite easy to conceive why men quarrel and fight in pursuit of wealth, pleasure and honours, but it is really puzzling why the very same passions so often provoked in these secular pursuits should manifest so vehemently in man's religious life also. Politicians on the one hand and rowdies on the other may be more immediately responsible for many of the worst features of communal trouble, but why should they select religion as their basis of operation unless there is something rotten in the prevailing religious mentality in the country? In order to understand the reason, a deeper analysis of the religious mentality in general and its special manifestation in our country is necessary.

Religion in its most comprehensive sense is concerned with the whole personality of man. Attempts have been made in the past to trace religion to some exclusive faculty in the intellectual or emotional life of man. Thus Max Muller considered religion to be a faculty or disposition which enables man to apprehend the Infinite under varying names and varying disguises. According to Herbert Spencer, religion springs from the tacit conviction of the human mind that the existence of the world, with all it contains and all which surround it, is a mystery ever pressing for interpretation. Every religion consists in the recognition of this mystery and a solution of the same. Apart from this intellectual definition of religion, there are others which locate it in man's emotional life. They single out some one of man's emotions like fear, awe, reverence, adoration, piety, dependence, love and cosmic feeling as the seat of religion in human nature. The most famous of all definitions of this kind is Schleierma-

cher's formula that the essence of religion consists in a feeling of absolute dependence upon God, but modern writers on the philosophy of religion refuse to accept these on the ground that they do not point out the difference distinguishing religion from other activities of life. The intellectual definitions are more akin to descriptions of philosophy whereas those based on emotions point to feelings that are involved in some form or other in what are called non-religious spheres of life as well. Hence modern psychologists argue that there is no single faculty which alone forms by itself the basis and motive power in man's religious life. The whole personality of man, consisting of all his intellectual and instinctive powers, is concerned in the religious life. According to Luba the distinctive feature of man's religious life consists not in its relation to any special aspect of his mental being, but in "the kind of power upon which dependence is felt and the kind of behaviour elicited by the power."

If this be true, and religion is deeply rooted in the vital impulses of life, religious life involves the skilful manipulation of any or all of those instincts which find a play in ordinary life. The very same impulses that operate in the human being engaged in the struggle for existence manifest in relation to those objects to which he attaches a religious value. No doubt in the case of persons who have advanced considerably in religious life, these instincts take a higher turn, and their character becomes practically unrecognisable due to the transformations they undergo on account of the contact with the higher realities of spiritual life. With the progress of spiritual life the religious mind grows in depth and intensity, but the circle of interests round which religion centres also

becomes narrower at the same time until it comes to encompass only such lofty ideals like self-control, purification of mind and cultivation of love and wisdom. But in the lower rungs of spiritual evolution the case is quite different. The religious mind has not then reached that fineness of perception which enables it to distinguish the end from all other issues and concentrate attention on that alone. Hence it has a tendency to consider even non-essential aspects of religious life as matters of vital interest, and religions as organised in society, therefore, concern themselves with a good many side issues to the utter confusion and misguidance of the common mind. The instincts, too, being yet unrefined by the deeper realisation of spiritual verities, are ready to take any crude turn as in ordinary matters relating to the struggle for existence. The very fact that the common instincts of human nature form the raw material of which the religious consciousness is made, leaves the possibility of these instincts manifesting in their usual form when occasions arise. This possibility is turned into actuality when any appropriate stimuli present themselves to the undeveloped human mind, and such stimuli are to be found in abundance in the kind of religion that organised churches make familiar to the mass mind.

This brings us to an investigation of the principles on which religious communities are organised. Religion has two aspects, the theological and the social, both of which seldom used to be distinguished in countries that came to accept the Semitic forms of faith. In the first place, religion provides the means for the attainment of final bliss for those who believe in its teachings regarding God, soul and other supermundane realities by following certain rituals, moral

codes and spiritual disciplines, and by believing in certain prophets and the scriptures associated with them. Besides they also form the basis of a tribe or community that keeps itself aloof from the rest of mankind. In the advanced countries of the modern world this formative principle required for bringing about a strong social sense is derived from territorial interests, economic motives, racial feelings and political traditions. But a few centuries ago even among the forward nations of the West theological beliefs used to be the basis of social organisation, and the tribal sense of the people used to find expression through religious forms in a greater measure than at the present day. Man is a social creature and is always in need of a common principle round which he may organise himself into a tribe for the better realisation of social ideals. Among the social instincts of man this tendency to group himself into tribes plays an important part in the history of civilisation. It is a tendency that mankind cannot get over, and must therefore find expression through some form or other in every age. In modern times interests of the kind we mentioned above have thrust themselves on the attention of men to a greater extent than before, and are therefore assuming greater importance in settling the social destinies of mankind. But in earlier days, since theological ideas formed the most predominant force in the lives of men, they used to be the centres round which societies were organised. For the Europeans who lived some centuries ago, the distinction between Christian and heathen or between Catholic and Protestant had greater significance than between white man and black man or Englishman and German. Hence religion as formative of tribes or social groups has great potentialities, and did actually exert its power in that

direction some centuries back even in countries which have now discarded it as a basis of social organisation.

In India the fortunes of religion as a force of social integration ran a different course. Whereas in Europe a single theophratry or religious brotherhood came to absorb all the people within its fold and jealously guard against the rise or intrusion of any other theophratry threatening its supremacy, in India there never arose any single religious brotherhood enfolding the whole population and organising them into a single tribe as opposed to every other in the world. On the other hand, the tendency of our culture has been to discourage the formation of theophratries. In India we have two words, Dharma and Mata, both of which denote quite different meanings. The latter word, "Mata", means doctrine and is similar in import to the English word "religion". In India the followers of a Mata or doctrine regarding God, soul, etc., propounded by a teacher, are called a Sampradaya, but a Sampradaya seldom signifies that its followers are bound together into a compact body by close ties of social contact. But in the West the Sampradaya which is primarily concerned with doctrinal matters formed itself also into a theophratry or social group on the basis of common belief. In India, as a rule, the Sampradayas did not crystallise into tribes. The basis of social organisation was rather Dharma than Mata. Men may have any opinion regarding supermundane realities, they may even be atheists, but still they could be members of their social order provided they adhered to their Dharma. Dharma in the most general sense of the term signifies that which inheres in a thing by nature and therefore regulates its existence as the individual member of a group. In regard to man, it is described as duty or

virtuous conduct, because it is by observing Dharma that man maintains his position as the member of a society and also enables society to function smoothly. Dharma has various aspects. There is Manava Dharma or the general duties of all mankind, which consist of abstinence from injury to creatures, truthfulness, honesty and self-control. These form the Dharma of man, because they distinguish man from animals. Men have also their Dharmas as citizens and members of households. Special Dharma adheres to men of particular Varnas, Kulas and Jatis. Conduct, dress, manners, occupations and customs relating to marriage, eating, etc., are to be regulated according to the Dharma of their special order. There was much vagueness about these special Dharmas, about what was right and what was wrong, and no one pretended to know the intricacies of their special working beyond the possibilities of mistake. The way of Dharma was admitted to be mysterious, and the safest guidance that could be given about it was that it is to be inferred from the conduct of great men. But whether definite or indefinite, men could remain as members of a certain group irrespective of their faith as long as they adhered to the Dharma that was upheld by the majority of their group. Thus the tendency among the ancient Hindus was to found organised tribes on the basis of Dharma, as was not the case among the religious groups of Semitic origin. And since according to their socio-religious ideals, it was one's birth into a special group that determined one's Dharma, the society came to be composed of a multitude of tribes, each following its own Dharma. Since the emphasis laid by the leaders of thought was on the special Dharma of Jatis and since no uniformity was insisted on questions of belief, the Hindus of

India could never attain to the conception of one united religious body or a big tribe with a strong communal consciousness. Even their conception of Mlechha did not mean a corresponding feeling of their own oneness. According to their broad philosophical ideas, every one belonged to the Varnashrama scheme, the division into the four Varnas being natural to all mankind, and if any body was called a Mlechha it was because he was conceived to have fallen from his Dharma and not because he differed from them in point of doctrine. The tribal feeling existing among them found expression through the Jatis with their particular Dharmas, and not through a collective consciousness based on theological beliefs.

The idea of theophratry was introduced into India by the Muslims. Like the Christians of the West, the Muslims also based their society on belief, and conceived of all those who shared their common faith as forming a united tribe that stood in distinction to all others in the world. This tribal aspect of religion was so strongly emphasised by Islam that the feeling associated with it became the most striking feature of this faith. As a result Islam has been able to develop a very strong sense of brotherhood which is rightly the pride of Muslims and the wonder of non-Muslims, but this brotherhood, it must be remembered, is cemented by an equally strong dislike of all who do not belong to their fold. We often hear of the fanaticism of the Mussulman, especially of his intolerance of persons who desert the fold by adopting another faith. This sense of intolerance is not any more in the Prophet or his teachings than in any other great spiritual leader or his conception of God and soul; but it is to be ascribed to the particular social experiences through which that religion has passed,

especially to its tradition of inseparably associating theological beliefs with the tribal instincts of man.

Now it was with the advent of the Muslims with their strong sense of tribal kinship that the Hindus also began to develop a similar attitude. The ancient Hindus had no word by which to designate themselves as a united body. The name Hindu was first given by the Persians and later on popularised by the Muslims who wanted to differentiate all those whom they found in the country entertaining beliefs different from theirs. Words like "Sanatana Dharma," "Vaidika Dharma" and others of similar import were newly coined or assumed their present meanings as the Hindus began to develop the feeling of a united tribe in modern times. Even now this tribal feeling has not completely passed from the stage of allegiance to the caste to the more comprehensive stage of tribal sympathy with all professing the same system of belief. For want of this feeling the Hindus till recently could never be roused up as a body when any communal clashes took place or other religious bodies trampled on their cherished sentiments. But now these conditions are rapidly changing, and the Hindus too are developing the more crystallised and unified form of tribal consciousness.

We have spoken at length about these manifestations of the tribal feeling among the Hindus and the Muslims in order to make clear what exactly is the factor in the religious consciousness of India that makes it possible for interested bodies to rouse up the worst feelings of human nature by an appeal to religion. This is possible because of the tribal spirit of religious organisations and not because people believe in God, soul and salvation, nor even because they owe allegiance to different

prophets and religious teachers. That diversity in matters of belief and allegiance need not necessarily result in the formation of tribes on its basis has been proved by what we have already said about the socio-religious organisation of the ancient Hindus. But even they could not avoid the evils of tribalism of an incoherent nature, not because they set up divisions on points of belief but because their conception of Dharma could not maintain its level of universality and consequently degenerated into petty rules of eating, marriage, dressing and other details of everyday life. But tribalism of this kind, though injurious to the social strength of the Hindus, is less menacing to the public peace because it is not permeated by a sense of self-consciousness and consequently of hatred of others, and also because it does not encourage an attitude of aggressiveness towards other tribes on a pretence of missionary zeal. But a theophratry of the Islamic type encourages tribalism of a very virulent and aggressive type. In the first place its doctrine of proselytism raises the possibility of conflict with other organised religious bodies. Next if it fosters a strong feeling of brotherhood within the tribe, it also breeds on the other hand an unsympathetic attitude towards men outside the fold and a sense of disapproval of everything foreign to the tribe. The old Hindu system also developed this pride and feeling of partisanship as manifested in the contemptuous attitude and unfair dealings of the higher castes with regard to their social inferiors, but what we wish to point out here is that those features were more diffused in nature and therefore less dynamic in operation. In the conception of Manava Dharma the Hindus had a perfect principle of social organisation. It may be incidentally mentioned that if our social leaders, in

place of emphasising on Jati Dharma, had organised the society on this principle of Manava Dharma or general duties of mankind, Indian society today would have been a model of perfection fit for other peoples to imitate. But in place of this our ancients developed the conception of Jati Dharma with the result that the Hindu society became the most disorganised conglomeration of social tribes. Very late in the day we are becoming conscious of the defects of this system, but even after this belated awakening our tendency is to follow not the ancient but undeveloped conception of Manava Dharma, but the dangerous ideal of theophratries with which we have become familiar in recent times.

In the beginning we have stated that in religious life the whole personality of man is concerned and that his instinctive and intellectual powers form the raw material of the forces brought into play in his religious strivings. Consequently there is always the danger of these emotions assuming their usual manifestations in the presence of unwholesome stimuli, especially in the lower stages of spiritual life. Under the existing conditions of religious organisation in India, the tribal sentiment of man has unfortunately been consecrated by religion and taken into its service as a valuable instrument of preservation and propaganda. Tribalism which forms the matrix of all higher forms of social organisation is only a primitive device of mankind for securing greater efficiency in the struggle for existence. All primitive societies are organised into small tribes which usually remain hostile towards neighbouring tribes and wage war with them for maintaining tribal honour as well as for securing the means of vigorous physical existence. The sentiments roused by the tribal idea are always those of

partiality towards one's own kith and kin, and suspicion, hostility and want of sympathy towards others. These sentiments that are unavoidable accompaniments of the tribal spirit have nothing spiritual in them. They are on the other hand akin to all other passions and prejudices that are to be met in man engaged in the struggle for existence. Therefore, when our religions have consecrated this tribal spirit into a first-rate spiritual value, no one need be surprised if it expresses itself in its own colour and casts its reflection on religion with which it has been wrongly identified. It is no wonder also that the tribal spirit which masquerades in the garb of religion among Hindus, Muslims, Christians and other religionists should form so serviceable a factor for communal politicians to work upon, and should also manifest in its crude form at their incitement. In the case of men who are advanced in their spiritual life, the awakening of wider sympathies eliminates all petty interests and competitive spirit from their religious consciousness, and hence the evil of tribalism cannot find any outlet in their life. But the common men cannot be expected to have risen to this high level of spiritual perfection, and in the light of the current teachings of their religion they attribute sacredness to many of those customs, beliefs and practices that are of purely tribal significance. Since they exalt the tribe into a spiritual institution, religious and tribal interests become interchangeable in practical life, and in all matters relating to tribal life they develop a keen sensitiveness attended by all the fervour of religious enthusiasm. In every question that has a faint relation to their tribal life they detect some religious significance, and accordingly respond to them in a spirit

of narrow partisanship. Every one is all praise for his religion—for its sublime ethics, for its spiritual idealism and for its rational spirit—but yet we see in the national life of India today how religions are belying these professions of their protagonists on account of all the questionable things that are spoken and done in their name. The secret of this contradiction lies in what we have explained above, *viz.*, in the bane of tribalism that is given a spiritual halo by its association with religion.

Hence, if India is to be free from the hold of communalism we have to move in the first place from tribalism to territorialism in matters relating to our collective life. We often hear it stated that bigotry and narrowness in religious matters can be overcome by disseminating among people the knowledge that all religions are from God and need therefore be respected. This is indeed a good idea worthy of being propagated, for in proportion to the currency it gains among religious circles the proselytising activities of many religious bodies may receive a set-back by the absence of spiritual incentives, and a check may thereby come to operate on a form of religious activity that is not a little responsible for much of the unfriendly feelings between religions in our country. The spread of this ideal may however be rendered more easy if people are given a historical insight into current religious conceptions and made to understand the real nature of much that passes nowadays as important aspects of their religion. But these are only half-way measures, for they can all become effective only in as far as the tribal feeling in human nature is diverted from religion into some new and more comprehensive channel of expression. That new channel may for the time consist in the idea of

territorialism, which means the substitution of faith by the idea of country as a basis of social organisation. Man always requires some set of ideas round which he may form his society. If he must give up faith as a nucleus of social organisation, he must have another in its place exercising an equally powerful appeal. In the love of country which the new nationalism preaches we have an idea that can do this work. Nationalism, it is true, is losing prestige in the eyes of many of the world's best thinkers and a move towards internationalism is being advocated everywhere nowadays. Such a move is perfectly legitimate in the case of countries that have already passed from tribalism to territorialism, but with regard to India where people are still bound by the tribal mentality, the lower ideal of nationalism will be more practical and advantageous in the immediate future than the ultimate ideal of internationalism. The sooner, therefore, the national sentiment is made familiar to the masses the speedier will come the solution of the communal problem, for it is only when this idea gains a powerful hold on the popular mind that the old tribal division that religions have imposed will be obliterated. The process, however, will have to be actively assisted by wise and judicious social legislation and an enlightened and far seeing educational policy, both of which will not yield to the clamours of blind bigots or self-seeking politi-

cians. Religion also can help in this nation-making process by ceasing to insist or emphasise on the tribal ideas that have been handed down from the past. The sooner they do this the better for them as well as the country at large, for by going against the spirit of the times, religions will not only pave the way for their own ruin but even bring discredit on some of those priceless principles of spiritual life which are at present in their keeping but which humanity can ill afford to forego.

But the change from tribalism to territorialism is a slow process and it will take some time to be completed even under judicious guidance and favourable conditions. In the meantime people must be saved from the immediate danger of communal antagonism, especially of riots which inflict untold sufferings on innocent and peaceful citizens. We feel much can be done in this direction if stringent measures are taken against papers that exist for fostering communal ill feeling and politicians who go from one part of the country to another preaching the gospel of communal warfare. We are familiar in these days with the rigorous press laws and strong measures adopted for suppressing political agitation. If a similar campaign against communal agitation is made, India can be saved from many of these riots, and the lives and properties of many innocent citizens can be saved.

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# WAS SANKARA A CRYPTO-BUDDHIST?

By K. A. Krishnaswamy Aiyar, B.A.

**S**OME critics who ought to know better look upon Sankara's system as Buddhism in disguise. This is due to an inaccurate appreciation of facts. The two schools are as opposed to each other as the poles. A mere surface-dip may give rise to a belief in their fancied identity. But, in the first place, like all Non-Sankara speculations the Buddhist view is closely restricted to the Waking experience. In the next, it affords no explanation of Time which is a logical implication of the doctrine of momentariness and cannot be absorbed by the latter. It is a Philistine notion that since Buddha declares that the world, as depending on consciousness, is unreal, his teaching is identical with Sankara's. We shall show briefly wherein the two systems seem to agree and wherein they differ.

## *Buddha's Position*

(1) The world is unreal. For it is only a concept. A concept can create its own object, and the object is unreal as in Dream.

(2) Consciousness which produces concepts is itself momentary, arising and disappearing every moment. Nothing persists through any two moments.

(3) The Ego is a momentary notion or concept and has no existence apart from the momentary consciousness.

(4) To believe in any permanent entity or essence, like the Atman or the World, is Avidya from which springs up desire, the mother of all ills including Rebirth.

(5) The removal of Avidya roots out desire and leads to the end of suffering, —to Nirvana, whatever that may mean.

## *Sankara's Position*

(1) "The world is unreal." Yes, says Sankara, but with a caveat. It is so because it is bound up with the state in which it appears and which it cannot transcend. But within the state both the subject and the object are real and are the inevitable correlates and counterparts of each other. The world with all its manifold elements, is, however, only a manifestation of Pure Consciousness which it presupposes. Life is not a sum of concepts merely, for a concept without content commits suicide, and contradicts the practical distinction between a dog that can bark and the *idea* of a dog that cannot. A concept cannot do duty for a feeling or a volition. An actual feeling can by no means be reduced to a concept of the feeling.

(2) Mental life unfolded in the Waking state is no doubt a stream of ideation. Consciousness *does* change every moment and the current of ideas ever flows. But this consciousness is only empirical, and, like the external world which is its invariable concomitant, is but a manifestation of Pure Consciousness. To talk of a current without a spring-head is devoid of meaning, and the source must be an abiding one, a changeless Witness, without which our memory of past states or our cognition of Change would be impossible. Memory connects the present with the past, and Change involves the experience of two moments. Both demand a persisting witness. Buddha's denial of the witnessing consciousness causes his system to collapse like a house of cards.

Besides, Buddha's idea of momentariness presupposes Time as its eternal background. His "consciousness" originating and dying each moment must emerge from Time and be swallowed up by Time, and it would be proposterous to extend this momentariness to Time itself. The doctrine of the momentariness of all things thus knocks its head against Time and breaks to pieces. It cannot explain Duration which has both a subjective and an objective phase and is fundamental to Life and Action. We are not ordinarily conscious of fugitive moments which are an intellectual division of Time, but of the duration of successive single states.

Further, Waking, Dream, and Sleep are not events occurring in one time-series. For, then they would be experienced as parts of one continuous state. The idea of momentariness cannot be applied to them.

(3) The Ego is not simply a notion. To think so is to be untrue to Life. It is far rather, as the rock-basis of Life, an immediacy; and though as a notion it may ever vary in content, it transcends Time, Change, and even the empirical consciousness, when it (the ego) objectifies the three states intuitively and enables one to say "I slept, I dreamt, I am awake." The Ego in this instance stands for the witness beyond all time and causation. It is Pure Consciousness or Brahman. When this is realised, to what low depths of unreality is the Waking consciousness, upon which Buddha builds with such confidence, hurled down! And to what sublime heights is the Ego elevated!

(4) Avidya is indeed the cause of all ills. But its activity consists pre-eminently in this, that it causes the unreal like the world to be taken for reality and the real like the Atman, which transcends the three states, to

escape our notice. Buddha himself has come under its power in this latter respect.

(5) The removal of Avidya leads not to Nirvana synonymous with annihilation, but to Vidya or the Knowledge of truth, nay, to The Truth *viz.* Reality. For, at this stage Truth and Reality become inseparably one. Vidya reveals that the Ego at the highest level is no other than Brahman, the highest all-inclusive Reality, of which empirical life is but an expression.

Buddha's position involves him, besides, in a dilemma. Does he stand for the momentariness of all things or for their nature as concepts? or for both? On the first supposition, Time is left to domineer over all else and remains an insoluble surd. On the second supposition, a concept presupposes consciousness which there is no means of vanquishing and must be admitted to have eternal life. For Consciousness whose offspring Concept is—with its adjutant Memory, cannot be included in its own effect. Consciousness is not a concept, for a concept cannot be conscious. Lastly, as to the combination, namely, a momentary concept, both universal time and consciousness are excluded thereby, and we shall have two entities instead of one claiming eternity and immortality, resulting in an inevitable annihilation of his theory of Annihilation.

Moreover, it is difficult to see how the knowledge of the momentariness of all things can include the witnessing consciousness, unless this is also regarded as an object,—an idea revolting to its nature as the eternal Subject. If knowledge is the final issue of Buddhist speculation, how can it be destroyed? If it cannot be destroyed, how can it also be momentary? We may pass over his idea of Nirvana since, firstly, it is

but an idea and as such momentary, and, secondly, since he has taken no pains to describe its nature and has left it in impenetrable mystery.

It may be claimed on behalf of Buddha that he arrived at his conclusion of the unreality of Life and all things, after a careful analysis of the three states, and that Sankara can score no point against him. The objective part of waking is known to be unreal by reference to dream-experience, and the subjective vanishes in Deep Sleep. Hence the whole is illusion. But this claim is invalid. Analysis implies consciousness to which objects are presented. The three states can be compared only by an indwelling, immanent, and witnessing consciousness which must persist throughout their sequence.

Otherwise the *sequence* cannot be cognised. Hence a logical analysis discloses not the unreality of all things, but the undeniable Witness as the Basic Reality.

Thus when one, who professes to know anything of philosophy, with an intellectual supineness altogether inexcusable, supports the unenlightened view that Sankara's system is Crypto-Buddhism, he illustrates in his own case the double effect of *Adhyasa*. One need not rise above common-sense to distinguish between a system that denies essence to things including the Soul (*Niratmaka*) and that which affirms Brahman as the immortal essence of each and all (*Sadatmaka*), between undiluted Nihilism and Absolute Monism, between the universal *Nay* and the universal *Yea*.

## MASTER MAHASAYA

(THE AUTHOR OF THE GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA)

*By A Devotee*

**I**F thousands today are attracted to study the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, meditate on him and the ideal he has placed before us, it is undoubtedly due to the evangelical zeal and apostolic fervour of Sjt. Mahendra Nath Gupta—familiarily known as Master Mahasaya amongst the circle of devotees—whose demise we intimated to our readers in the last issue. It was not given to all to live in such close intimacy as he did with a spiritual personality like Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and to recognise in him in his very life-time a manifestation of divine Shakti Incarnate in flesh, the like of which perhaps the world has hardly witnessed. Sri Ramakrishna will ever remain to posterity, 'a flesh and blood reality'; for such is the silent impression that one feels even after a cursory

perusal of the writings which Sjt. Mahendra Nath has left behind him. Through the pages of Mahendra Nath's diary-leaves the personality of the Master stands in bold relief as a 'living and breathing identity'. And it is because of this vivid portrayal that the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna weaves an additional charm over the reader. To many of us in Southern India, who had not the advantage and privilege of coming under the direct influence of Sri Ramakrishna's chosen Sannyasin and householder disciples, the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna gave the first introduction to that mighty life whose silent influence has cast a spell on all that have come within its ambient.

When the history of modern India will be written and the forces that have

added their quota in recent times to her distinctive spiritual heritage analysed, the part played by Mahendra Nath will be no less in value in comparison to what the West owes to the Apostles of Christ whose Gospels have shaped European life and culture to a large extent. National life in India gets dynamic only within spiritual environs. And in India that life has its unit in the family. Viewed from this standpoint one can easily note how Sjt. Mahendra Nath's writings are shaping the national character. Every household in Bengal is familiar with his Kathamrita, and in many of the outlying provinces through English and vernacular translations, the literature has spread far and wide. And many who have read this book even once feel in their heart of hearts that here in Sri Ramakrishna they have found their ideal, the Truth and the Way.

If the writings of this sage have such an important bearing on the spiritual evolution of Modern India, the writer too was no less fascinating and attractive. And in this issue we shall attempt to place before our readers a few salient incidents of his life. Sjt. Mahendra Nath was born in Calcutta in his ancestral home at Sibnarain Das Lane, on July 14th., 1854. His parents Sjt. Madhusudan Gupta and Srimati Swarnamayee Devi were both very pious people. They had four sons and four daughters and Mahendra Nath was their third child. Mahendra Nath was fondly attached to his mother, and Swarnamayee Devi left an indelible impression on him. When he was a boy his mother passed away, and that created a deep void in his life and made him very disconsolate. When he was thus passing through the agony of separation, one night he saw a dream. He saw his mother who consoled him with these words, "I have so long pro-

tested you and looked after you ; I shall still continue to look after you but you will not see me." In after days Sjt. Mahendra Nath used to tell us, "It is the Divine Mother of the Universe who in one form as my earthly mother protected me in life. She is still protecting and watching over my life." Every one noted in him even in his childhood a temperament susceptible to religious influences. As a boy he had to pass through the Siddheswari Kali Temple at Tantania, and the presence of the Deity used to evoke extraordinary spiritual fervour in him, and he would bow his head in great veneration before the Sacred Image. During the festival of Durga Puja he would sit for long hours before the Image, lost to all external attractions, deeply absorbed in the meditation of the Divine Mother. The company of holy men he sought from the very beginning of his life. Large concourse of Sadhus and divines used to come to Calcutta during the Ganga Sagar Mela or *en route* to Jagannath. Mahendra would often seek their company, and he used to say that in after-life this habit of his stood him in great stead as it eventually brought him to the holy feet of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna.

Mahendra Nath was a very precocious boy. He passed the Entrance Examination from the Hare School and got the second rank in the Presidency. In the F. A. examination he stood fifth and he graduated from the Presidency College securing the third rank. The present site of the Presidency College was acquired and the building thereon was erected during this period. The famous Professor Mr. C. H. Tawney was then in service, and Mahendra Nath was a student under him. He was a favourite student of this professor, and even after the retirement of Mr. Tawney, Mahendra Nath kept up a

regular correspondence with him. This professor had an idealist temperament, and he appreciated Sri Ramakrishna, and recognised in him a saint and wrote a small brochure on the Master.

During the close of his college career Mahendra Nath married the daughter of Sjt. Thakur Charan Sen, Srimati Nikunja Devi. Mahendra Nath came into close contact with the Brahmo leader and preacher Keshab Chandra Sen, to whom he became closely related by this marriage. After taking his degree and settling down in life, he took up the school master's profession, and served as head master of Narail High School, City, Aryan, Model, Metropolitan, Shyam-bazar Branch, Oriental Seminary. After serving as a teacher in high schools he took up teaching work in the Colleges and served the City, Ripon and Metropolitan Colleges, as professor of English Literature, Mental and Moral Science and History and Political Economy.

During this period of his life Keshab Sen was his ideal. Keshab at that time was an outstanding personality, and was attracting to his fold many a talented youth by his soul-stirring orations, pious disposition and catholic outlook. Western education had brought within its wake a note of violent criticism, and ancient Hindu usages and customs seemed as meaningless jargon of a bygone age, and the fresh men from the Universities revolted in an uncompromising manner against all orthodox ways and conceptions of life. The cult of the Brahmo Samaj and its modernised outlook saved many a soul from breaking off completely from the faith of their forefathers. Its eclecticism was appealing, its rituals novel, and its preacher a man of God. So it is no wonder that Mahendra Nath along with many others took a living interest in this movement and attended many of Keshab's Upasanas

both at his family residence and in the Navavidhan temple. The sermons of Keshab thrilled his soul and gave him a remote idea of that spiritual awareness which he was fully to realise later on in the blessed company and under the direct charge of his Master, Sri Ramakrishna. Keshab had already made the acquaintance of the prophet of Dakshineswar and was a frequent visitor to the Master. And Mahendra Nath used to say that it was perhaps because of the influence of Sri Ramakrishna percolating to him through Keshab that his soul was so enthused with his sermons.

It was in the year 1882 that Mahendra Nath came into direct contact with Sri Ramakrishna. That historic meeting is recorded in so fascinating a manner by "M." that we would request our readers to turn over the first few pages of the Gospel and enjoy the atmosphere and its setting in the language of the writer himself. The very first meeting charmed him beyond expression, and he was powerfully impressed by the figure of the Master lost practically to all outward consciousness, absorbed in communion with God. Here was a person who was not educated in the modern sense of the term, but to whom the book of life was revealing every moment the truths of a deeper and subtler world in which he moved and lived and had his being. The effect of this on Mahendra Nath is too deep for words. After the exchange of a few words and a short-lived attempt at argumentation he became tongue-tied. His own pride in his studies and understanding of life and the truths of existence was soon cast to the winds. Here was one who could convert humanity not with sermons and set prayers but with the warmth of his own realisations—one, who could breathe into him the very breath of

Divinity. Here he learned that religious truths were not matters for discussion and disputation, but were to be felt and realised. "Intellect has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Intellect, a feeble organon limited and conditioned by the senses, cannot solve the problem of the Unconditioned and the Unlimited. Revelation is necessary to have a knowledge of the unconditioned Reality." The Master impressed on him the value of Sat-Sanga, meditation and solitude. Thenceforward he began to visit the Master more frequently and dedicated his life at his feet. Mahendra Nath was very sensitive to the atmosphere of spirituality which the Master spread around him. One day finding him so susceptible to the religious influences, the Master broke a secret to him. The Master told him, "Whatever you hear falling from this mouth, know it is the Mother that is speaking." Mahendra began to visit the Master very often and at times even spend some days in the company of the Master at the Temple of Dakshineswar. Seeing Mahendra come so often to the temple the Master one day humorously remarked, "A peacock was given a dose of opium at four o'clock. The next day it appeared again precisely at that hour. It was under the spell of opium and came for another dose."

As a result of his close association with the Brahmo Samaj and its tenets Mahendra Nath's mind was inclined more to the Formless aspect of worship. Sri Ramakrishna soon found this out and gave him instructions accordingly. One day he took him to see Moti Seal's Jhil where there was a wide expanse of water and asked him to note how the fish in the waters move about with great freedom and suggested to him thereby the nature of Nirakara Dhyan. But the Master was very careful to

impress on the mind of the novice that in worshipping God, there are many paths, and every mode of approach is equally valid as a path of Sadhana. Thus, as was usually the case with the Master, he broadbased his teachings and made Mahendra Nath appreciate his mission of preaching the harmony of all methods of Sadhana. He told him, "Recognise the worship of God with forms. He appears before devotees in forms carved out of Consciousness (Chinmaya)." One day Mahendra Nath told his Master, "I find that in the beginning it is not easy to fix the mind on the Formless." "Did you see so?" asked the Master. "Why not then worship God in Forms also?" Thus even in his spiritual practices Mahendra Nath began to meditate on the Formful aspect of Divinity. When Mahendra Nath asked him whether God can be worshipped as Mother, Sri Ramakrishna replied, "Yes, one can; She is *Brahmamayeerupa*." The Master also described to him in detail one day the state of realisation of one who takes up the Nirakara aspect. On 5th June, 1883, the Master asked "M", "What sort of worship appeals to you now?" and he replied, "Now the Formless worship appeals to me, but I have also understood that He has become all Forms."

Another day the Master asked him, "What do you think of me? How many annas of knowledge have I?" and "M" replied, "Annas! I cannot say; but such love, knowledge, dispassion and catholicity, I have not seen elsewhere." On another occasion "M" told his Master, "The Lord has created you Himself by His own hands (self create), and other beings mounting them on a machine." Then on 28th July 1885, "M" made an open declaration, "I think that Jesus Christ, Chaitanya and yourself are one and the same." Another day as the Master was explaining Avatarhood

he compared the Avatar to a big opening in the wall through which the Infinite is seen and realised. "M" at once remarked, "You are that opening through which the Unknown is seen." The Master was highly pleased, and accosting him said, "You have understood that at last. It is excellent." It was that very evening "M" expressed his liking for the Formless and the Master told him, "I also would not see Forms of Gods before, now also it is diminishing (visions of Forms)." Then "M" said, "Of forms the manifestation of God in humanity appeals to me (Naralila)", and the Master consoled him by saying "That is sufficient and you are seeing ME." Thus the Master made him realise the truth of Incarnate Divinity, and summed up his instructions to him by telling him one day, "It is true that He is Akhanda Satchidananda beyond mind and speech; it is also true that He appears in various Sakara Chinmaya (Conscious) Forms; it is also true that He becomes incarnate in the form of a human being (Avatar) for the uplift of mankind; it is also true that He has become manifested as all these various forms of creation; yet He is infinitely more besides; who can fathom Him or reach His limit?" He again told "M", "Is it true that I can find God within only, and that when I shut my eyes? Does He not appear as existing in various forms of creation when I open my eyes as well?", and "M" answered, "Yes". When the Master at any time used to speak of seeing God with eyes open, he used to pointedly draw "M's" attention to it, for evidently he was training him in that mode of worship. And one who has seen him and conversed with him could easily guess this from that habitual mystic look in his eyes and that *Samadrishti* with which he viewed life and its problems.

Sri Ramakrishna had an extraordinary capacity to study with the speed of an intuition the character of the people who came to him for spiritual instruction. Almost on the first glance he could read into them and study their peculiar characteristics, both mental and spiritual. He was a very acute connoisseur of men and things, and no trait or incident however trivial would escape his notice. Again when he would be in the Bhava Mukha plane the Master would see persons who were to visit him at a much later date and play an important part in the Lila of his life. Sgt. Mahendra Nath was such a soul whom he had seen in a vision many years before he actually had the blessing of meeting Sri Ramakrishna. In that vision the Master saw him in the company of Sri Krishna Chaitanya and his disciples, and so he told him on one occasion, "I have recognised you, hearing-you read Chaitanya Bhagavat. You are of the same essence as me, as father and son, and so long as you did not come here, you were self-forgotten. Now you will know yourself. Now go and live in the world unattached." So without any exertion the Master recognised Mahendra Nath and grouped him amongst the most intimate of his disciples. One day he told him, "I can see from the signs of your eyes, brow and face, that you are a Yogi. You look like a Yogi who has just left his seat of meditation." Such was the high estimate the Master had of him. His features were classical, and often reminded one of the Rishis of old.

The Master was at first disconcerted to learn that Mahendra Nath had married and had a child too. He therefore advised him how to lead an ideal Grihasta life, and all his instructions tended to make him live a life of *Grihasta Sannyas*. One day the Master in one of his spiritual moods prayed to the

Divine Mother, "Mother, why have You given him only one Kala or Power?...I see, that will be sufficient for Your work." On another day he prayed to his Mother, "Do not make him give up everything. Do in the end what You will. If You keep him in the world, show Yourself to him now and then. Otherwise how will he remain in the worldly life? Where will he find the zest for living?" Latterly when Mahendra Nath one day expressed his desire for giving up all for the sake of the Lord, the Master said, "You are well in God already. Is it good to give up all? The speaker or preacher of the word—the Lord keeps in the world with a bondage. Otherwise who will speak the word of God to people? That is why the Mother has kept you in worldly life." From these words of the Master we can have an idea about the nature of the mission that the Master wanted to entrust to Mahendra Nath. He lived a life of intense meditation, and at the same time discharged his duties to his family and society. He had a high regard for the Sannyasin disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and in the early days of the Baranagore Math he would visit the Sadhus often and join them in their devotions. He was very loyal to his Sannyasin Gurus. Swami Vivekananda writes of him from America in one of his letters to the Math, "When Sri Sri Thakur left his body everybody gave us up as a few unripe urchins. But "M" and a few others did not leave us in the lurch. We cannot repay our debt to him." Some of the Antaranga Sannyasin disciples of the Master were his students. It was the custom with "M" that whenever he would find a spiritually minded boy amongst his students, he would favour him by introducing him to the Master. And when after the passing away of the Master some of them donned the ochre robe,

Mahendra Nath showed them a veneration bordering on worship. His devotion to the Sadhus of the Baranagore Math cannot be expressed in words. So much so that he would sprinkle his head at times, unnoticed by others, with the water kept in the cistern near the lavatory, and he thought he would purify himself thereby. Can the madness of sentiment go further? He liked very much to feel himself not of this world, so that the world and its belongings may not make any deep appeal to him; and to train himself into this habit of thought he would at dead of night retire to the open verandah before the Senate house and sleep amongst the homeless beggars of the city, who usually collected there to spend the night. This, he used to say, would at least temporarily make him feel that he was one with no possession. When he was employed in College, whenever he could snatch a few minutes of leisure, he would go to a solitary room on the roof, and there, alone and by himself, open and read his diary and revive once more the memory of those happy days he spent with his Master.

This takes us to the important topic of how the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna came to be written. One day to a group of devotees he narrated the story: "I was in worldly life, bound to my work and could not visit the Master whenever I wished. So I used to note his words and impressions in order to be able to think on them in the interval before I met him again, so that the impression made in my mind may not be overlaid by the press of worldly work and pre-occupations. It is thus for my own benefit that I first made the notes, so that I may realise his teachings more perfectly." The Gospel was published first in 1897 in a pamphlet form in English. Swami Vivekananda was beside himself with joy when he read it

and wrote about it to Mahendra Nath, "I am in a transport when I read it. The dramatic part is infinitely beautiful, the language fresh and pointed and withal easy. I now understand why none of us attempted his life before. It has been reserved for you—this great work". In this connection Swami Shivanandaji, the present President of the Ramakrishna Mission, told us, "Whenever there was an interesting talk, the Master would call Master Mahasaya, if he was not in the room, and then draw his attention to the holy words spoken. We did not know then why Thakur did so. Now we can realise that this action of the Master had an important significance, for it was reserved for Master Mahasaya to publish to the outer world the sayings of the Master." In 1902 leaves from his Diary were published as Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita, Part I by Sri "M". The 2nd part was published in 1905. In 1907 the Brahnavadin Office published from Madras the first part of the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, and the 3rd part of the Bengali Kathamrita was also published in the same year. In 1910 the fourth part of the Bengali Kathamrita was given out to the world.

In that same letter, where Swami Vivekananda congratulated "M" over the publication of the Gospel, the Swamiji writes, "The move is quite original and never was the life of a great Teacher brought before the public untarnished by the writer's mind as you are doing." In the postscript the Swamiji adds, "Socratic dialogues are Plato all over—you are entirely hidden." But Master Mahasaya could not remain hidden for a longer time. As a result of these publications hundreds began to throng to his house. Indians from all parts of the country and Europeans and Americans,

in fact all who came to Calcutta to visit the holy places associated with the Master, never failed to climb up the four storied school-house and pay their respects to "M" who lived there and received the devotees and incessantly talked to them of God-love and realisation. Many also visited him in his own house, which had been rendered sacred by the visits of the Master and sanctified by the Holy Mother who spent many days there. It was in his residence at Hatibagan the Master one day surprised him by a visit. "M" was lying ill with cholera. The news reached the Master and he grew so anxious over his condition that he immediately came to his house and blessed "M". Swami Vivekananda, Swami Brahmananda and others used to say that it was this *Ahetuki-kripa* and *Bhalobhasha* (love) of the Master that made all who came to him forget the entire world of Samsara, and made them bond slaves to his affection.

In 1905 he retired from active work and became the proprietor of the Morton Institution which he purchased from the sons of Nakari Ghosh. Under his efficient management the number of scholars increased, and it was removed to a very commodious four storied house in 50, Ahmerst Street where it has remained for the last twenty years. It is impossible to give our readers an idea of the life he lived there. He occupied a room on the roof, and there seated in evenings on a chair amidst an array of earnest devotees, with the starry heavens above and happy collection of plants around, he would recount the days he lived with the Master. And the awe-struck devotees would feel that to him time had not moved and that he was still breathing the very air around the Master in the picturesque setting of the temple of Dakshineswar, amidst the very sacred associations which he has so

beautifully and successfully conveyed to an ever grateful posterity through the pages of his Kathamrita.

Even during the life time of the Master, when Sri Ramakrishna was lying ill at Cossipore garden, "M" visited Kamarpukur and other holy places sanctified by the Master's early life and childhood. On his return from this pilgrimage he narrated to his Master in detail all the places he saw. The Master was astonished to hear the disciple's narration. He could no more contain himself, and the Master with tears in his eyes exclaimed, "How could you ever go into such out of the way places infested by robbers?" and turning to a near-by devotee he said, "Look at his love! Nobody has told him. Yet he of himself has with infinite care and love gone over those places and scenes because *this person* (pointing to himself) has walked in those places. His love is like that of Vibhishana who, when he found a human being, at once dressed him up in rich apparel and worshipped him by waving lights and said, "This is the form of my beloved Ramachandra!"

After the passing away of the Master, Mahendra Nath visited many holy places—Benares, Ayodhya, Vrindavan, Haridwar and Kankhal. At Benares he paid a visit to the famous Trilinga Swami and fed him with sweets with his own hands. He had a long talk also with Bhaskarananda Swami.

Mahendra Nath's humility was peculiarly noteworthy. His Master had asked him to live like a servant, and literally he carried out this injunction. He considered himself the servant of all. He never assumed the role of a teacher. He taught indirectly, and that had a wonderful effect on all who came in close contact with him. In life he was very simple, and although he could afford to live more lavishly he never

courted luxury. His meals were very simple and consisted only of rice and milk, and this he continued for days, months and years together.

Three months before he entered the peace of Mahasamadhi he came to his house at 13/2 Guruprasad Chowdhury Lane where the daily worship and Seva of his Master are regularly conducted. In the company of Sadhus and other devotees he began to spend his time in a much more concentrated endeavour to live in the constant presence of his Master,—a picture of loveliness and divinity, a flower of purity and bliss. He was suffering for a long time from neuralgic spasms, and when an attack would come, terrible was the pain. Though his body was so tortured by illness, there was ever on him a benign expression, a countenance of rapturous peace and joy. In spite of his illness, at the advanced age of 73 he made his life more rigorous. As usual he cooked his own meal, swept and cleaned his rooms and personally supervised the service of his Master in the family shrine. In the early part of January he had taken in hand the publication of the last part of Kathamrita. To the blessed devotees he would dictate the conversations of his Master, referring now and then to his diary. At times in the stillness of midnight he would awaken a near-by devotee and tell him, "Let us listen to the words of the Master in the depths of the night as he explains the truth of the Pranava", and thus the dictation and writing would proceed for over an hour.

During the last few days his discourses became much more frequent. He would sit for long hours before the family shrine and lose himself in meditation. On the 3rd of June he was exceptionally bright and active. He visited his people twice, came back and

prepared his meal. In the afternoon he was found cleaning the basement of the house. To a Swamiji whom he loved very much and who kept his company always he said, "I am cleaning this place a little." Then he sat down and said, "I have a little spasm now, but after a little rest it will go away; but it is more frequent now." The Swamiji remarked to him just changing the topic from his illness, "It is a wonder that rats go even into the midst of filth—rather unusual." He replied, "No, they are showing us that everything is Brah-mamaya (full of Brahman)", and sat silent for a while.

That night was the Falaharini Kali Puja and he encouraged the devotees to go to Dakshineswar or Gadhadhar Ashram to witness the Puja. He began

to look into the proofs of the last part of Kathamrita when a violent attack of the spasm came on him. He did not allow the Bhakta who was with him to go and inform the other devotees of his health. This attack was his last. He did not revive from it; and with his mind firmly set at the feet of his Master, fully conscious to the last and with the words "Mother-Guru-deva, take me up in Thy Arms" this wonderful man of God, who literally lived in God, cast off his mortal coil and found shelter in the Abode of the Eternal.\*

Om Santi ! Santi ! Santi !

\* The writer of this article acknowledges his indebtedness to Swami Raghavanandaji who has helped him to gather the incidents regarding Sri M's life recorded herein.

## WAS THERE A UNITARY KARMA DOCTRINE ?

By H. D. Bhattacharyya, Darsanasagara, M.A., B.L., (P.R.S.)

(Continued from last issue)

THE extremely complicated feature of the Karma doctrine comes into further notice when we try to ascertain the exact way in which personal action was supposed to meet its reward or punishment at a later time. There was no unanimity about the place where and the time when the fruits of action were to be enjoyed. As the whole world of life was knit by kinship, fruits of action might be enjoyed anywhere—in heaven and hell, in the heights, plains and depths of the earth and in any form of living existence, the general law being that for good action a higher embodiment was ordained and for bad action a lower one. The caste system introduced a complication by suggesting the possibility of a degradation of caste as a penalty of moral

lapses. An attempt at nicety was made by suggesting that for a particular kind of mentality shown during one life a rebirth in an animal existence where this tendency is manifested in its extreme form was an appropriate penalty; thus a thief would be reborn as a mouse (obviously connecting the root *mus* with the word *musika*) and a libertine as a hog. The feeling, however, that that would enable the person to enjoy what he wanted sometimes dictated the opposite doctrine that in rebirth the means of that particular type of enjoyment would be taken away, e.g., an adulterer is supposed to be reborn as a eunuch. Conversely, for good deeds done appropriate rewards in heaven and embodiment on earth were ordained—a giver of a seat to a Bhikshu

receiving a golden couch in heaven, a giver of water a pleasant resort by a river-side, etc. A faint echo of this is to be found in many popular *vratas* (in Bengal) where the reward in the next birth is supposed to follow the nature of the gift made during this: thus a woman giving coins concealed in sweet-meats gets hidden treasure in the next birth; a woman putting vermilion mark on the forehead of a married lady at the parting of the hairs ensures pre-deceasing her husband in the next birth, possibly also in this if she is not a widow. Of course, the whole matter was left vague from the necessity of the case and no attempt was made to connect a particular fruit with the general question of embodiment in the next birth; for example, a lady winning merit of a particular kind might or might not get a human embodiment on account of her other sins and thus she might lose the benefit, so far at least as the next birth is concerned, of that particular good deed. As future embodiments are not determined by single acts, this risk is always present unless we suppose that in the animal form itself conjugal felicity might result from good actions done in the previous human embodiment, although nothing like this is explicitly upheld.

The truth is that in spite of occasional testimonies of persons born with memory of their past lives (*Jatismara*) there is generally no direct knowledge of the connection between act and fruit, and only certain probable hypotheses could be advanced to explain worldly inequalities. It was felt, therefore, that if the law of moral action is not to be violated, there must be some result of all deeds, although the time and place of requital might be indefinite. A broad distinction was made between actions that had good fruits after death in view; for example, a *Jyotistoma* sacrifice had

heaven as the objective and obviously, therefore, its fruit could be reaped only after death. On the other hand, a person performing the *Kariri* sacrifice had worldly advance in view, just as a rain sacrifice had the bringing of rain as the objective. Now if no result follows from the sacrifice in the shape of worldly prosperity or immediate rain, then the purpose of the sacrifice is not realised. It was accordingly held that benefit in this life might ensue from certain acts. But disappointments must have occurred very frequently in such matters, and so, nothing daunted, the theorists propounded the view that some unseen hindrance, caused by the misdeeds of a past life, or some default in the performance of the sacrifice was responsible for failure. It is evident that this makeshift could not please all and it was freely acknowledged that a third class of fruition was possible, namely, of *chitra* actions which produced results indifferently in this life or after death. If no result followed in this life, it is to be presumed that it would follow in a life hereafter. Now the recognition of this third class of actions is really a mere restatement of one's belief in the efficacy of the moral law and is not so definite as one's faith in the production of appropriate results either here or hereafter from two different kinds of actions like *Jyotistoma* and *Kariri*. Besides, the operation of unseen hindrances was such a vague and yet dangerous supposition that no one could be sure of the production of any desired result by the performance of appropriate actions. The undesirable past not only determines the present condition but also operates to our discomfiture in an unseen way and stabs us from behind in the dark.

It was not contended, however, that our actions were not entirely free when we performed such deeds for benefit.

More complications arose when it was averred that a man might be born with a bad or good will because of bad or good actions in a past life. Apart from the *vasanas* or instincts appropriate to each kind of embodiment there might be impulses of a more decided character which prone the mind towards certain types of action. This handicap might not be fair, for that would baffle all attempts to rise in the scale of existence and better one's future for all times. A gradual sinking in the scale of values in spite of all attempts is incongruous with that freedom of the will with which beings must be endowed if they are to be made responsible for their deeds. If the past misdeeds not only determined the present but also loaded it in a definite way, it was functioning out of proportion to its place in the moral scheme ; yet this supposition was occasionally made by those who saw in moral lapse a serious danger to spiritual benefit. No wonder, therefore, that when the odds were so heavy against the struggling soul, gentle mercy should suggest a mechanical working off of misdeeds by lower embodiments or death in the mother's womb, at birth or in infancy. It was in a sense literally true that whom the gods loved died young, for death before the years of discretion meant loss of further opportunities to sink in the scale of values. But when the gods were not so much in evidence, it must be supposed that even on the personal-mechanical theory repeated deaths in infancy were expiations of heinous deeds and that lower embodiments also served the same purpose. But that the tradition was not uniform can be proved by the fact that even lower forms of existence were credited with powers of improving their lot by kindly service—a reference to the Jataka fables is enough to show that even animals

were capable of good deeds. It is evident, therefore, that the relation between human and animal form was not very clearly conceived, that is, whether an animal form was only an expiation of human sins or also an independent mode of life where the seeds of future action could be matured by free will. As a matter of fact, the moralistic tendency was so great that the emphasis that was laid on degradation to lower forms for moral failures was not also laid with equal insistence on the possibility of improvement of lot from a lower form of existence by moral virtue, presumably because the exact nature of free action on the part of lower animals and worms could not be very well conceived. For the same reason, it was not very clearly laid down whether animals could sink in value by their deeds, the theorists probably thinking that the doctrine of Karma did not include the fates of animals as such but only of human souls entrapped for a time in an animal form and waiting to be released after serving their full term of imprisonment for moral faults. Exactly a similar reason forbade the extension of the law to the gods except in so far as they were deified men or humanised deities. It is only rarely that the deeds of gods meet with their merited rewards or punishments, and even then only when they are anthropomorphically viewed. Regarding the other types of beings, Siddhas, Yakshas, Gandharvas, Kinaras, etc., very little is said, simply because they were not objects of interest or emulation to human beings as the gods were, and nothing very definite was conceived regarding their behaviour in their own realms. Even when the moral law was extended to them it was in respect of their dealings with one another that they suffered and not generally for their actions and

attitude towards men : there was something like the distinction between private and international morality in the relation between different types of beings.

That there was no definiteness about the time of fructification is also certain. Particularly heinous deeds were supposed to take effect at once or within a short time : a curse, for example, could take effect at once and even violate the law that the type of embodiment was fixed by the actions of a previous life. Nahusha was changed into a serpent and Ahalya into a stone almost simultaneously with the pronouncement of the curse by Agastya and Gautama respectively. We have already referred to the fact that the time of fructification was also supposed to depend upon the kind of sacrifice performed. In later times people began to think that a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush and reverted to the Vedic method of ensuring worldly prosperity in preference to transmundane benefit. Accordingly, many forms of action were devised to get children and health and worldly advancement and to get rid of enemies. We shall speak of these magical rites later on ; but there is no doubt that a cash earthly return of moral action was preferred to a future credit in heavenly account. Possibly the successes were remembered and the failures forgotten, and thus the system of rites to secure the fruits of action here below took firm root.

But there is no doubt that a clear distinction was soon drawn between rites and moral actions, and the expectation of results was confined to the former alone. From the nature of the case doing good could not be always regarded as an investment on which an earthly return was either desired or expected, and the too many cases of

virtue and happiness not going together could not but suggest the theory that moral actions got their rewards in a hereafter and that immorality met its doom in the same way. We need not tarry over the problem of heaven as a reward of morality, for in later moralistic, as opposed to theistic, speculations it was only a temporary halting place for the good : our main interest is in further embodiment of those who for want of saving knowledge were obliged to be reincarnated. It is difficult to say what the moral law would demand as the interval between death and reincarnation and whether the divine judge took any time to send a sinning soul into fresh bondage. The God that can dispose of the fates of innumerable souls at a time need not necessarily take any time to pass a soul into a new frame, and possibly the analogy used in the Gita about a soul changing its worn out body for a fresh one like a change of clothes made light of all time-interval : like a leech attaching itself to a new support simultaneously with the relinquishing of an old one, the soul may be supposed to get into a new frame at the moment of the dissolution of an old body. But there is no doubt that unanimity on this point as on many others was not secured. Apart from the fact that Buddhism did not think it necessary that the same individual should get embodiment and did not specify clearly either when the moral result should get together a group of five Skandhas to fulfil the moral law, the cult of the *manes* in later times popularised the theory that the departed spirit waits for his funeral oblations before being fitted to get an embodiment. Matters were extremely complicated by the intrusion of the *śraddha* doctrine, for it was freely held that a *preta* existence served as an intermediate form between death and

re-embodiment. We shall talk of the other aspects of this doctrine later, but the idea that a time-gap intervened was probably an innovation in the strict moral law, and was meant to make provision for the performance of funerary rites as well as for the judgment upon the merits of the departed in the court of the divine judge. In theistic speculations, of course, the will of the Lord was paramount, and He was credited with the power of suspending the operation of the law of inexorable moral justice in the shape of a *pralaya* when souls were supposed to take rest between two embodiments. Popular belief which cares very little for accuracy or logic amplified the doctrine in its own way. If a father dies and a child is conceived in quick succession, it is not unoften that the belief is held that it is the father that has come back as the son; and if there be any resemblance between the two, then the belief be-

comes a certainty. Here the time may be short or long according to the length of the gap between the two events. Obviously, here, not science but sentiment is at work.

One thing stands out prominently in the first theory of Karma, namely, that man is the architect of his own fate for good or evil and that no outside help is available to redeem him from his destiny. It has been pointed out that the slow progress of Christianity among the cultured classes in India is due to this peculiar Indian belief that no intercessor can render effective help in salvation nor any redeemer take away man's personal guilt. This is not wholly true, for, as we shall see later on, theistic faith was not an unknown thing in India and the cult of the Gurus came very near the belief in an intercessor or mediator. But there is no doubt that extreme individualism in morals is the keynote of Indian spiritual development.

(To be continued.)

## BUDDHISM AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS

*By Swami Jagadiswarananda*

**N**O thought-system of the world in the present age can evade the challenge of modern thought. The latest discoveries of science and philosophy have tolled the death-knell of all dogmatism and creedalism, traditionalism and ritualism of religions. Bigoted self-sufficiency and superstitious assertions can no longer hold supreme in any religion. The new spirit of universalism has brought about a revolution in the thought-world. For a new lease of life every religion must in the modern age compare notes with sister

faiths and find out its common ground of agreement with them.

Can Buddhism meet the challenge of the New Era without any fear of Truth? It is said that Mahayana in Japan has girded up her loins and been up and doing to revitalise herself in the light of modern thought. Will Hinayana lag behind in the march of religions in responding to the call of time, or overlook and denounce the example of the sister faith with derisive smile? But if Buddhism is to live culturally and spiritually as

before and keep pace with the advancing modern knowledge, Hinayana and Mahayana must again unite and embrace each other in a bond of mutual co-ordination and co-operation. Another indispensable condition of life and growth for Buddhism is to join hands in love and respect with her Mother Church, Hinduism or more properly called the Vedic religion whence she sprang up as a branch from a river. Is not Buddhism a part of the great Indo-Aryan religion? It is a matter of painful regret that Buddhism has not only forgotten totally its ancestral heritage, but now cherishes a feeling of hatred and competition to the original source. In the course of our present study we shall try to make out the close affinity of Buddhism and Vedanta, for Vedanta is the scriptural name of Hinduism as a whole.

According to Dr. Mrs. Rhys Davids, Buddhism is not the Bon-Po of Vedic Religion. She says that Buddhism is the fulfilment, the expansion and popularisation of the abstruse Vedic doctrine. Buddha never opposed but fulfilled and widened the religion of the Upanishads where buttress and strengthening were needed. Buddha brought forward quite a new emphasis on the doctrine of man as becoming (Werden or Bhū), or dynamic in manifold ways against the prevailing doctrine of man as static Sat (Divine Being). Buddha followed in his life the Gnana Marga of the Vedanta, but he stood against the degenerating Karma Kanda of the Vedas, and in this respect he was a Vedic Protestant.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan in his 'History of Indian Philosophy,' Volume I, page 360, says: "For a revelation of struggles of spirit and the experiences of soul Buddha had already to hand the

supreme work of Indian genius, the Upanishads. Early Buddhism is not absolutely an original doctrine. It is no freak in the evolution of Indian thought. Buddha did not break away completely from the spiritual ideas of his age and country. To be in open revolt against the conventional and legalistic religion of his time is one thing; to abandon the leading spirit lying behind it is another. Buddha himself admits that the Dharma which he has discovered by an effort of self-culture is the ancient way, the Aryan Path, the Eternal Dharma. Buddha is not so much creating a new Dharma as rediscovering an old norm. It is the venerable tradition that has been adapted to meet the special needs of the age. To develop this theory Buddha had only to rid the Upanishads of their inconsistent compromises with Vedic Polytheism and Religion, set aside the transcendental aspect as being indemonstrable to thought and unnecessary to morals and emphasise the ethical universalism and idealism of the Upanishads. Early Buddhism, we venture to hazard a conjecture, is a reinstatement of the thought of the Upanishads from a new view-point."

Mrs. Rhys Davids says in her Buddhism, page 83/84, that Gautama was born and brought up and lived and died a Hindu. There was not much in the metaphysics and principles of Gautama which cannot be found in one or the other of the orthodox systems, and a great deal of his morality could be matched from earlier or later Hindu books. Such originality as Gautama possessed lay in the way in which he adopted, enlarged, ennobled and systematised that which had already been well said by others, in the way in which he carried them out to their logical conclusion. Principles of equity and justice were already acknowledged

by some of the most prominent Hindu thinkers. The difference between him and other teachers lay chiefly in his liberality and his broad public spirit of philanthropy.

Olden Berg in his *Buddha*, page 63, says: It is certain that Buddhism has acquired an inheritance from Brahminism, not merely a series of its most important dogmas but what is not less significant to the historians, the bent of its religious thought and feelings which are more easily comprehended than expressed in words.

The contempt for ritualism is common for Buddhism and the Upanishads. Buddhism shared with the rest of Aryan India the belief in the law of Karma and the possibility of attaining Nirvana. That sorrow or suffering is the essential fact of life on earth is admitted by almost all schools of Indian thought, the Upanishads included. Buddha himself was not aware of any incongruity between his theory and that of the Upanishads. He felt that he had the support and sympathy of the Upanishads and their followers. He classed the Brahmins along with the Buddhist mendicants and used the word as one of honour in reference to Buddhist Arhats and saints. Buddhism, in its origin at least, says Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, is an Oxford Hinduism, and the spirit of the Upanishads is the life-stream of Buddhism. Rhys Davids says in his *Buddhism*, page 85, that Buddhism grew and flourished within the fold of orthodox Hindu beliefs.

Pessimism and melancholy of life, which form the basic doctrines of Buddhism, are foreshadowed in the Upanishads. Repeatedly it is asked in the Upanishads to the Rishis by their disciples: "What is the mystery of existence, what is the secret of Death and how can one conquer it?" "What is there by knowing which

everything is known?" In the Sankhya philosophy of Kapila Muni, which is pre-Buddhistic in origin, and which is one of the six principal systems of Hindu Philosophy, the first enquiry is how to get rid of three-fold miseries, the *Adhidaivic*, *Adhyatmic* and the *Adhibhoutic*, that body and mind are heir to. Before Buddha the Upanishads had already indicated the cause of suffering. To them the eternal is Bliss and the transitory is painful. *Yo Vai Bhuma Tat Sukham*, *Nalpe Sukham Asti*. The eternal, the unchanging, the immutable, and the undecaying is Truth, Freedom and Happiness; but the world of birth, old age and death is subject to suffering. The Real is not to be found in the finite, not-self, which is subject to origination and decess. The fundamental proposition of Buddhism that life is sorrow is in the main accepted from the Upanishads. But the Upanishads, it must be remembered, look upon the world as sorrow only when it is viewed as separate from Brahman. To the man of realisation, however, even this world that previously seemed to be soaked in sorrow, appears to be a blissful manifestation of Brahman.

For Buddha, as for the Upanishads, the whole world is conditioned by causes. While the Upanishads say that the names and forms of things have no self-existence as such but are products of a causal series which has no beginning or end, Buddha maintains that all things undergo changes indicated by *Utpada* (origination), *Sthiti* (stay), *Jara* (growth), and *Nirodha* (destruction). The Upanishads are as clear as early Buddhism that in this world of unrelenting change and eternal flux there is no permanent security for man. The Upanishadic doctrine of impermanence was adopted by early Buddhism and developed into the theory of momentariness.

The fundamental difference between Buddhism and the Vedānta lies in the conception of a metaphysical unchanging Reality, which is the true self of man. The speculation of the Brahmins, says Olden Berg, in his *Buddha*, page 251, apprehended being in all becoming and that of the Buddhists becoming in all apparent being—in the former case, substance without causality and in the latter causality without substance. Sir S. Radhakrishnan says: "This difference lies in the distribution of emphasis only on the dominant aspects but not fundamentally, for both believe that the universe is an undivided movement, an indivisible duration. The Upanishads do not posit a mere being exclusive of becoming but to them the world is an appearance, but it is an appearance of reality." Buddha, agreeing with the Upanishads, holds that the phenomena of the world as known to our intellect possess only a conditioned existence. While the Upanishadic teachers posit an absolute being at the root of this relative world of becoming, Buddhism does not do that. But Yamakami Sogen in his "Systems of Buddhist Thought", page 134, says that the substratum of everything is eternal and permanent. What changes every moment is merely the phase of a thing, so that it is erroneous to affirm that according to Buddhism the thing of the first moment ceases to exist when the second moment arrives. Whereas the Upanishads assert a reality beyond change or becoming, Buddhism suspends judgment on this question. However much the Buddha might have tried to avoid a reply to the question of the ultimate Reality which lay beyond the categories of the phenomenal world, he did not seem to have had any doubt about it. Buddha believed certainly in an ontological reality that endures

beyond the shifting appearances of the visible world. For in "Udana viii 3" Buddha says, "There is an unborn, an unoriginated, an unmade, an uncompounded; were there not, Oh mendicants, there will be no escape from the world of the born, the originated, the made and the compounded."

The Buddha was neither an agnostic nor an atheist as is commonly and widely held even by his immediate and remote followers. The Buddha has been misunderstood like many other world saviours. His silence as regards the ultimate Reality was due to fullness of mystic realisation which is inexpressible and in the words of the Upanishads, beyond mind and speech.—Avangmanasagocharam. Natalie Rokotoff in his "Foundations of Buddhism," page 28, says, "Certainly Buddha's knowledge was not limited to his doctrines, at least to what he was made to say by his later followers, but caution prompted by great wisdom made him hesitant to divulge conceptions which, if misunderstood, might be disastrous." "One day the Blessed One in a Simsā grove in Kosambi," continues the Russian orientalist, "took a few leaves from the tree above and said, 'As the leaves in my hand are few in number and far more are the leaves on the tree above, even so, Oh mendicants, what I have perceived and not communicated to you is far more than what I have communicated to you.' A tradition of three circles of his teachings was established for the chosen ones, for the members of the Sangha, and for all."

The Buddhist theory of five Kandas—Rupa (form), Vedana (feeling), Samja (perception), Samakara (disposition) and Vijnana (reason)—which are repeatedly produced and destroyed every moment is developed out of Nama-Rupa-Karma of the Vedānta. The Vedānta

declares emphatically that the Atman of man which is also the Reality underlying the world is not to be identified with body or mental life which grows or changes. The Vedantic Atman is not also the transmigrating soul, but what transmigrates is the Sukshma Sareera or subtle body, which consists of five Pranas, five organs of knowledge, and five organs of action, mind and Buddhi. It is separate from the gross physical body. Body is called by Buddhists as Samskara, by the Vedantists as Samhati, but both mean organisation. Though the Buddha was silent about Atman enunciated in the Upanishads yet in Puggalapannatti we see there is a theory of Atman called Sasvatavada (Eternalism) which holds that the soul truly exists in this life and in the next. Nagarjuna in his commentaries on the Prajnaparamita Sutra says: "The Tathagata sometimes taught that the Atman exists. When he preached that the Atman exists and is to be the receiver of misery and happiness, in successive lives, of the demerits and merits of its Karma, his object was to save men from falling into the heresy of Nihilism."

The Buddha compared the doctrine of Pratityasamutpada or dependent causation to a wheel. It is interesting to note that a similar view is suggested in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. The word Brahma Chakra or the wheel of Brahma, occurs in the Svetasvatara Upanishad (vi, I). It is called Bhava Chakra, or the Wheel of Existence in early Buddhism. Mr. E. V. Havel says in his "Ideals of Indian Art" that Vedic Brahmins used to turn to the right a wheel fastened to a post while chanting Sama Veda during the performance of sacrifices, from which the Buddhist expression 'turning the wheel of law' or Dharma-Chakra-Pravartan has come.

If we begin from the right stand-point the connected historical study of Indian thought as an organic entity, it will be seen that Buddhism is an unbroken continuity of the Vedic Religion, for everything in Buddhism is favourable to the Vedantic hypothesis. Even the code of ethical duties in the Upanishads and early Buddhism are not different in essentials.

The Vedanta says that as one sun is reflected as many in many water bubbles, so one Paramatman appears to be many in many Jivatmans. In the same way Buddhist writers like Asvaghosha and Vasubandhu explain individuality as imperfect reflection of the one Universal Mind. In Bodhicharyya-avata, Santideva describes the Trikaya or three bodies of Buddha,—Dharma Kaya, Sambhoga Kaya, and Nirmana Kaya,—just like Vedantic Brahman (limitless and unconditioned), Iswara and Avatara. The ultimate Truth is described by the same author in Siksha-samuchaya as Sambritti Satya and Paramartha Satya, just like Vedantic Absolute (Paramarthaika) and Related (Vyavaharika) Truth. (Quoted by Dr. A. Coomaraswamy in his "Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism.")

When a man is enlightened by true wisdom the liberated soul is called the Buddha, the knower, in Buddhism. Olden Berg says in his Buddha, page 52: Here Brahminical speculation anticipated Buddhism in diction as well as in thought. When he who has come to know of the Atman is mentioned in the Satapatha Brahmana as the 'delivered', the word then used for knowing is Prati-Buddha which also signifies 'awakening'—the word which our Buddhist brothers are accustomed to use when they describe how Buddha has in a solemn hour under the Bodhi tree gained the knowledge of delivering Truth, or is awake to the delivering

Truth, the same word from which also the name Buddha, that is the knowing, the awake, is derived. Just so in Vedanta one who realises Brahman becomes Brahman—Brahmavit Brahmaiva Bhavati,—and each man is potentially Brahman. According to B. L. Suzuki, M. A., Singon, one of the eight great Buddhist sects prevailing in Japan, which is based on Mahavairohan Sutra and Vajrasekhara Sutra and founded by Kobo Daishi, teaches the doctrine of Funishen, that is, not two, all is not two but one. As is said in the Rigveda, Ekam Sat Vipra Bahutha Vadanti, the Supreme Being is one, sages call It variously. This Singon doctrine is just like Vedantic Advaita-

Vada. It teaches that Buddhahood is latent within us and all things, animals and plants, that each soul is a potential Buddha, and that when man attains Nirvana, he becomes one with the Supreme Buddha, which is Joy Supreme. The Tendai sect introduced into Japan by Priest Saicho and which is based on Satdharm Pundarika teaches the absolute oneness of all things, and Nirvana is the realisation of that Oneness with the Absolute One Mind, the Buddha. *In conclusion, we add that Buddhistic Nirvana and Vedantic Samadhi are synonyms of a self-same transcendental state of wisdom and enlightenment, and that the implication of Buddhism is Vedanta.*

(To be continued.)

## ETHICS OF THE UPANISHADS

By Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, M.A., Ph. D.

### (6) *The Ethics of the Wanderer*

The wanderer is of two types—the learner and the learned.

The learner puts a check upon Nature's impellings with a view to realise the Truth in quiet. Life at this stage requires withdrawnness and isolation from the active participation in the affairs of the world, so that one may perceive the bent of being and give it a training necessary to guide and control it in order to realise the hidden potentialities. The learner is, therefore, to practise celibacy and meditation, and he may change the course of life to active adaptation if he feels the insistent demands for it, or he may remain all through life an introvert, and finally may pass into Light and Silence. The learned practise the silence of being to pass into the quiet, the final liberation. Illumination is possible in the busy life, for nothing can prevent it. With proper culture and attention, it is bound

to come; but to keep up the continuity and ultimately to pass into the great calm, freedom from a distracting surrounding is the imperative demand. The continuity in transcendence is the desired and coveted ideal, and therefore life in the end refuses to be disturbed by any claim of practical or social life. Introversion and extroversion seem to keep blessed company in some cases, where the life without much tension can keep an equilibrium between the active callings and the inward harmony and silence.

Such souls are indeed unique specimens of humanity, their being is finely balanced in activity and meditation, in work and knowledge. Their activism helps them to regulate the forces, creative ideals and values; their silence helps them to transcend these impellings and enjoy the plenum of being.

But this course cannot long continue, and the force and demand of Truth can-

not long allow the adept to pursue this double course of life; time comes when the life in Truth becomes an irresistible call with him and a natural retirement comes; with the satisfaction and satiety of our extroverted nature, the introverted self gets greater claim upon us. Nature stands exposed before us and the illusion of practical reason and of its claims soon clears off before us by experience gained through life; and the call comes to man to forsake the *vita-activa*, and not any longer be deluded by hopes and allurements, by the sense of duties and responsibilities of life. Life is lived intensively in order that the illusions of life can be laid bare before us, and the whole bent of being is directed to make the realised Truth a living force in us. So complex is life, so many forces are at work in us, that the transcendent wisdom cannot always be effective to call at once a halt to the wonted course of life. But when life has been lived to some extent, the habitually extroverted introvert seeks retirement in order to live the life of transcendence. Its dignity is felt before. Its truth is realised long. But it cannot be fully lived un-

less the tendencies and impulses of life are settled down through withdrawn-ness.

The learned wanderer requires no training or discipline, for he has already finished it. He is anxious to be absorbed in the transcendent mood of thought, for this is the happiest state of which mortals here can have a taste and a foreshadowing. To be free from all ripples of the mind stuff, to be free from the waves of persistent demands of life, to be shut up in transcendence are promises highly pleasing and blessed; these are experiences so new and uncommon and so greatly delightful that a forsaking or a forgetting of the life's past adaptation is felt not only desirable but a blessed state of existence.

The learned wanderer follows *vita-contemplativa* and *vita-negativa* not with the intention and desire of acquiring knowledge, but with the sole intention of passing into silence. Contemplation gives absorption. Absorption makes the silence perfectly established and the being evenly poised and perfectly attuned in Truth.

*(To be continued)*

## A STUDY OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

*Govinda Chandra Dev, M. A.*

student of philosophy is nothing, if he be not sympathetic first and a critic next. In order to grasp the views of a philosopher, we must try first of all to approximate as far as practicable to the mental frame of the philosopher himself, and then to play the role of the unbiased critic. But we often fail to find out, to adapt an Aristotelian phrase, the 'golden mean' between sympathetic study and critical evaluation, appreciation and comparison. As

a result of this, our study of a philosopher either betrays our own dogmatic bent of mind, or ends in a tragic misrepresentation of the views of the man himself. As a matter of fact, some unsympathetic criticisms that have been at times levelled against one philosopher by another have their origin in such a sad misunderstanding of the views of the one by the other. Today, we should avoid the extremes of dogmatic acceptance on the one hand and

irrelevant criticism on the other, and should apply the power of clear judgment in determining the intrinsic value of the doctrines of a philosopher.

A comparatively sad spectacle comes before our mind's eye when we find people criticising Indian philosophy as a whole as nothing substantial.\* We cannot find out the real significance of such summary remarks which apply to the philosophy of a country as a whole. When some people say that Indian philosophy is nothing, they are surely dogmatising at the cost of sound logical thinking. Equally dogmatic and impertinent is the remark that western philosophy is nothing but an intellectual jugglery. Serious thinking would have long before dissuaded us from passing such remarks. As free thinkers we must keep our hearts wide open for a critical appreciation of everything, be it eastern or western. In the sphere of philosophy, cosmopolitan spirit we should cordially welcome, if we are not biased.

The general significance of Indian philosophy may, we think, be best understood by a grasp of the charges that have been levelled against it by the majority of the western interpreters of Indian philosophy. It would be rash on our part to hazard the opinion that they have not made a sincere attempt to study the philosophy of the East. It would be much more correct to opine that in spite of their best efforts many of them have not been able to make themselves conversant with the kindred note of Indian thinking, because of their western mode of thought and of their own conception of life and philosophy. Consequently, when we go through the recent dis-

sertations on Indian philosophy from the pen of Indian scholars, we feel inclined to appreciate more than ever the significance of Indian philosophy. But for that reason, the evaluation of the charges against Indian philosophy is not fruitless, since these criticisms have behind them a vast knowledge of Indian philosophy. We would fare no better, would rather prove worse, if we proceeded to make a critical and comparative study of the philosophy of the West.

The majority of the western interpreters of Indian philosophy are frightened at its pessimistic trend of thinking. Indian philosophy, the system of Charvaka being excluded, considers this world to be a vale of sorrow. Western thinkers, especially scientists, harp profusely on progress. But Indian philosophy holds before us no such idea, no hopeful picture of the world, rather depicts it in the gloomiest terms possible. Herein Indian thinkers generally agree, whereas in upholding the contrary doctrine—the note of optimism—western thinkers generally shake hands with each other in unanimity. It appears from this that it is not without some justice that Indian speculation in the sphere of philosophy has been regarded as pessimistic.

It may be argued that pessimism is not, after all, a charge against philosophical thinking. It is enough for philosophy, if it be not illogical and inconsistent, and everybody knows that pessimism cannot probably amount to a logical error of a serious type. But the opponent would show that after all, all sorts of philosophy must have a bearing on life. Pessimism has an enervating influence in as much as it over-colours the horrors of existence. Optimism, on the contrary, makes us energetic and active, and as a result of this the former is bad philosophy and the latter is a good one.

\*Stace—Critical study of the GK. Phy., Chap. I.

Thilly—History of Phy., Introduction.

But even if it be taken for granted that pessimism is bad philosophy since it produces an enervating effect upon the mind, still it can with ample justice be shown that the type of pessimism which Indian philosophy advocates cannot be accused of such a charge. Indian philosophy does not maintain that because of the fact that this world is a vale of sorrow, therefore there is no way out of it. Rather, it upholds the message of Moksha, Nirvana, Kaivalya—all of which point to a state beyond sorrow. Thus Indian philosophy is not a charter for suicide, but is a message of hope. Such pessimism leaves ample scope for the highest development of the individual.

Further, philosophy must be loyal to facts. It cannot explain away facts simply because they do not suit its temper. If this world, as we find it, be a vale of sorrow, philosophy has no right to deny this fact. In the words of Russell "reason is a harmonising rather than a controlling force." The fact indeed is today evident before all philosophers that this world is not the best of all possible worlds. So in modern times we hear of meliorism, instead of clear-cut optimism. Modern man says that this world, as he finds it, is a vale of sorrow, but he will make it a paradise.

Optimism which denies sorrow or evil is pulpy. But pessimism, which shows a way out of evil, is real optimism. It does not deny facts of the ordinary world but goes a step beyond it. Says Bosanquet,—"I believe in optimism, but no optimism is worth its salt that does not go all the way with pessimism and arrive at a point beyond it." In this sense Indian philosophy upholds optimism of a deeper order.

But the thesis, namely, that philosophy must have a bearing on life indi-

cates philosophic timidity. Every sort of philosophy, as a matter of fact, has some bearing on life. But this bearing is not the connotation, but is properly speaking an 'accident' of philosophy. As philosophers, we should not anticipate pessimism, meliorism, or optimism but should proceed very logically in our explanation of the world. The theory of life which follows as a sequel of our speculation should without hesitation be received by us. Philosophy is, in the words of Socrates, 'love for wisdom'; knowledge for knowledge's sake is its watchword, and consequently a commercial procedure in philosophical speculation is highly defective. Well has it been said by Russell, "The conscious purpose of philosophy, therefore, ought to be solely to understand the world as well as possible, not to establish this or that position which is morally desirable." (An Outline of Philosophy, P 310.)

Wise loyalty to facts of a higher order on the part of Indian philosophy has been the source of other misunderstandings. Because of the fact that Indian philosophy recognises the validity of the visions of the seers as stated in the scriptures, mainly in the Upanishads, it has been regarded as dogmatic. The whole misunderstanding is due to the fallacy of treating these statements as mere assumptions and not as facts of a higher order. Critics might have done better, had they not recognised the existence of such facts. But they have done worse by regarding these as dogmatic assumptions. Philosophy must start with some facts as data, and Indian philosophy starts with these experiences as its data. There is probably nothing dogmatic in it. As a modern man considers something amply proved if it is scientific, so these Indian thinkers consider these visions as valid. As

modern man finds nothing dogmatic in the conclusions of science since they are facts proved by experiments, so Indian thinkers of old found nothing dogmatic in accepting the visions of the sages since they were also experimented facts.

Much of contemporary philosophy is based on the most recent conclusions of science. Reject the validity of the behaviouristic psychology and that of Einsteinian theory of relativity, and the whole of Russell's 'An outline of Philosophy' at once falls to the ground. Russell himself has said in his epoch-making dissertation 'Scientific Method in Philosophy,' that philosophy should accept the method and not the conclusions of science, but as a matter of fact he himself has accepted the validity of the latest discoveries of science basing thereupon his own metaphysics. But this has not been illogical, according to our estimation, since conclusions of science are proved facts. And if this be not dogmatism, we may pertinently maintain that Indian philosophy is not as well dogmatic.

Further, whether philosophy should proceed with the experience of the plain man of the street or with that of a wise sage is a very debatable point upon which unanimity of opinion will not be easy to obtain. Indian philosophy chooses the latter as its data for rationalisation, and western philosophy mainly the former.

Loyalty to facts of a higher order has been responsible also for the staticity of Indian philosophy often harped upon by the western critic. Philosophy cannot be progressive or dynamic, if it proceeds to explain facts and not to create them. Philosophy is not imagination. It is not poetry—the result of exalted poetic mood. Western philosophy is an interpretation of reality by the help of the intellect, it frames hypotheses

regarding the nature of reality. But Indian philosophy is an interpretation of the perspective of reality gained by the sages through intuition. Neither tendency is to be abhorred. But for this reason the staticity of the former is not a defect.

Western critics do not even hesitate to remark that Indian philosophy is ultimately unethical in character, and upholds a false doctrine of morality namely intellectualism. The unethical character of a certain philosophy cannot consistently be regarded as a charge by western thinkers, since they speak so much of "knowledge for knowledge's sake." If they uphold knowledge for its own sake, then all big talks about moral significance of knowledge become meaningless. But still Stace, says tauntingly, "Philosophy in India has never separated itself from religion and practical needs, knowledge for its own sake is rarely to be found," (A Critical History of G.K. Philosophy, P. 14.)

But the charge itself is false. Indian philosophy recognises a stage beyond good and evil, a stage of ethical perfection when the sense of duty dies a natural death. From this fact, it cannot legitimately be inferred that it upholds immorality, and that the wise sage is a debauch of the first water. We often make our own ignorance a point in favour of the thesis we like to establish. Because a man like Sankaracharya says, "Nistraigunypathi vicharatam ko vidhi ko nishedhah" "For the wise sage, there are no rules and regulations." From this it does not follow that he acts immorally. It is because we cannot conceive of this stage, that we treat it as an undesirable stage. Bradley has also recognised the existence of a super-moral stage. What is beyond morality, is not certainly less than morality. Such

criticism betrays the ignorance of western critics regarding such a higher

The charge of intellectualism is a misunderstanding, pure and simple. Knowledge can never make a man virtuous, if he does not transform by voluntary efforts, his own mental frame. The knowledge of all the maxims of all sacred books of the world cannot make a man virtuous unless he makes a sincere effort to mould his character. But Indian philosophy maintains that the knowledge of the ultimate Reality makes a man automatically virtuous. This is, according to the general estimation of western scholars, a manifest contradiction. On this point they do not hesitate to frame charges against Socrates, Plato and Spinoza, since all of them uniformly maintain that a knowledge of the ultimate Reality makes a man automatically moral, rather super-moral. Here also they seem to make their ignorance a case in point. The seers of India, Socrates, Plato and Spinoza were not fools who would maintain that ordinary knowledge makes one virtuous. But

it is in the hands of the critics that the words find such a wonderful meaning. The knowledge of Brahman, the adequate knowledge of the Substance of Spinoza, and the philosophical knowledge of Plato's Idea of the Good, are not the knowledge of the ordinary level but something higher. All of them, when they speak of knowledge, speak of something entirely different from ordinary knowledge. This knowledge presupposes a huge amount of moral culture without which nobody can aspire to have a glimpse of the ultimate Reality. We fail to consider all these facts and proceed to put the label of "intellectualism" upon their doctrine. This is not critical evaluation but sheer misunderstanding.

These considerations show that Indian thinking in the sphere of philosophy is not less rational than western philosophy, as a whole. Over and above this it has a factual basis, whereas western philosophy is more or less hypothetical in character. Life should be moulded with reference to facts, and imagination would not always be a good guide in this respect.

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

*By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao*

VAITATHYA PRAKARANA

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Wise men declare that all objects seen in a dream are unreal (unsubstantial). This is because the objects are inside the body in a very confined space. (1)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

On the authority of Chan. Up. "(there was) only one, non-dual," it has been

said already that on the dawn of true knowledge, duality ceases to appear. This is (solely) on the authority of Sruti (Agamas or scriptures). It is possible to establish the unreality of duality by means of reasoning also, and this second chapter is begun with that object with the words "Vaitathyam, &c." (unreality, &c). Vaitathyam means the state of being unreal or false. Wise men

well acquainted with the instruments of knowledge (Pramanas) say that all things in a dream, both inside (emotions, feelings, &c.) and outside, (i.e., jars, pots, clothes, &c.) are unreal. The reason for considering them unreal is now stated. (Because) their locality is inside the body: objects like an elephant and a mountain appear to be inside the body and not outside of it. Therefore, they must be unreal. It may be objected that "being within" is not a valid reason from which we could infer the unreality of objects, because jars and other things inside (a room for instance) are real. To this is replied that they are unreal because they are in a very confined space. It is not possible for mountains and elephants to exist in the Nadis (nerves or blood vessels) which are closely packed in a confined space in the body. Mountains, &c., cannot possibly exist in the body.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

(The dreamer) cannot (really) have gone to a distant place and seen the objects there, as the time is so short. Moreover, one does not find himself when awake in the distant place (to which he had gone in his dream.) (2)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

It is objected that it is not right to consider the dream objects as being limited to a confined space; for to one sleeping in the east, dreams appear to occur in the north. To this is replied that the dreamer does not go out of his body and see dreams in a different place, for as soon as a man sleeps, he sees dreams in different places which are hundreds of leagues distant from where he sleeps and which would take months to reach by travelling in the ordinary way. Therefore, the dreamer cannot have gone to another place, as the time is so short. Moreover, no

dreamer on awaking has found himself in the place of his dream. Also, if a dreamer has (really) gone to a different place, he should find himself waking in that place (of his dream). This never occurs. A dreamer going to sleep at night, dreams that he is seeing objects and meeting various persons in daylight. The people that the dreamer had met, must also have been aware of it. But this never happens. Otherwise they must say that they met the dreamer on such and such an occasion. Such a thing does not occur. Therefore, there is no going to different places during dreams.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Sruti (Brih., Up.) declares that according to reason there are no chariots and such things (in dreams). Therefore, it is said that Sruti itself reveals the unreality of these things. (3)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

There is also another reason for saying that dream-objects are unreal. Brih. Up. says, "There (that is, in dream) there are no chariots, (no horses and roads suitable for them)." This statement is based on reason, that the chariots, &c., seen in dream do not really exist. Knowers of Brahman say that the object of the Sruti is to establish first the unreality (of dream objects) on account of their being manifested in a very confined space and then to reveal the fact that Atman manifests himself (as these objects in dreams).

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

For this reason, the objects appearing in the waking state are also unreal. Here (in waking) it is just what occurs in dream. But there is a difference in the fact that dream-objects are inside the body and are in a very confined space. (4)

*Sankara's Commentary*

The proposition sought to be established is that objects appearing in the waking state are unreal. The ground for such inference is that what appears (is unreal). The illustration is the resemblance to the things appearing in dream. Just as the objects appearing in the dream are unreal, so the objects appearing in the waking state are similar (i.e. unreal). This statement of the reason is 'Upanaya'. Therefore, the conclusion is that in waking also objects appearing are unreal. The dream-objects being inside the body and in a very confined space, shows the difference between them and those appearing in waking. As regards unreality, they are alike, as both are appearances.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

The wise declare that dreaming and waking conditions are one on account of it having been established that the various objects in them (that is, dream and waking) are all alike (so far as their unreality is concerned). (5)

*Sankara's Commentary*

The wise men say that dream and waking are one on account of the well-known fact of the cognition of objects being alike in both. What has been established already is stated here.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

That which (is of the nature of non-existence) either in the beginning or end, does not also exist now (that is, when they appear). Though the objects that appear are unreal, they look as if they are real. (6)

*Sankara's Commentary*

There is another reason why objects that appear in the waking state are unreal. Like a mirage, they do not exist either in the beginning or in the end. It is well established in this world that a thing which (is of the nature of non-existence) in the beginning and in the end, does not also exist in the interval. Like the unreal but appearing (visible) mirage, the objects appearing in the waking state have no beginning or end and so are unreal. But to the ignorant people who do not know the real nature of Atman, they look as if they are real.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

**A Vain Charge**

We have published two articles on Buddhism in this number—one from the able pen of Mr. K. A. Krishnaswamy Aiyar who brings out the sharp distinction between Buddha's doctrines and Sankara's Advaita System, and the other by Swami Jagadiswarananda who seeks to trace the genesis of Buddhist systems of thought to the Upanishadic conceptions. It may appear that the trend of thought in these two articles is contradictory, but on deeper analysis it will be seen that the contradiction is more apparent than real. For in the

one the contrast is drawn from metaphysical considerations, while in the other the resemblance is pointed out from historical standpoint.

It has been an old trick with anti-Advaitins to call Sankara a crypto-Buddhist in order to discredit his system in the eyes of pious Hindus who regard Buddha as a teacher of heretical doctrines. The charge was levelled long ago by Vignana Bhikshu, and has since been emphasised again and again by all Indian theologians in all their tirades against Sankara's metaphysics. But it is rather enigma-

tie to note that while the Hindu opponents of Sankara look upon his system as Buddhism in disguise, Sankara himself has in his works vigorously refuted what he conceived to be the teachings of Buddha, and what is more, there are Buddhist revivalists today who look upon Sankara as the greatest enemy of the Buddhist faith. Is it proper to call one a Buddhist in disguise—one who refused to accept that compliment for himself, and who is regarded in no good light by many Buddhist divines?

That in metaphysics there is profound difference between the two systems is undeniable, one representing, as Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyar points out, the universal 'Aye' and the other the universal 'Nay'. But in comparing Buddha with Sankara there is a difficulty which we are yet unable to overcome. For whereas Sankara's writings enable us to know precisely what he taught, in the case of Buddha we know only what his followers conceived him to have taught. As Swami Jagadiswarananda has pointed out, modern criticism of Buddhist scriptures is just beginning to give us an inkling of the vast transformations that the recorded teachings of the Great Master have undergone in the hands of later generations of disciples. Again, Buddha's teachings have given rise to so many varieties of religions and philosophical systems, each one claiming itself to be the most faithful presentation of the Master's teachings. Sankara himself was familiar with the Buddhist systems of philosophy prevalent in India in his own days—and with none of these he agreed,—and besides there are the still more numerous sects that developed in China and Japan, some of them devoid even of that negative note generally associated with Buddhism. Under these circumstances a metaphysical comparison between Sankara's system and Buddha's teachings is difficult due to the very uncertainty of the latter. The best that can be done until historical criticism arrives at a more precise understanding

of the original teachings of Buddha is to select, as Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyar has done, some of the salient features that are common to the important systems of Buddhist thought, and compare them with Sankara's system.

A historical comparison, not with Sankara's system, but with the *Upanishadic doctrines* in general, is more easy to make, and in the hands of persons free from theological prejudices, will prove an excellent method to point out the kinship of the two streams of thought, and thus pave the way for a more harmonious relationship between the two. The philosophical and religious conceptions embodied in the Upanishads form the common source of all systems of Indian thought. This is a principle of great importance in any historical and synthetic study of Indian philosophies and religions. If we recognise the ultimate basis of Buddhist systems in the common cultural heritage of Indo-Aryans, it is not difficult to find some sort of affinity, from historical standpoint of course, between the ethical, theological and to some extent even metaphysical conception of Buddhist and Vaidic systems of thought. This is as it ought to be, since systems of thought that had a common source and developed in the same soil can not be kept apart in watertight compartments without exerting some sort of mutual influence. But when it comes to the ultimate problem of metaphysics, namely to the description of Reality, there is bound to be difference between different philosophers, and clear thinking always demands the recognition of such difference. Historically speaking Buddhist systems of philosophy might have exerted some influence on Sankara's doctrines; but it must be remembered that in this sense the Buddhist doctrines of Buddhahood, hero-worship, image-worship, etc., have influenced the various systems of Indian theism as well. This does not make Sankara's system Crypto-Buddhism any more than it does the same with Indian theism.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XIX]

SEPTEMBER, 1932

[No. 5

## HINDU ETHICS

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अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।  
दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥  
अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।  
दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥  
तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।  
भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥

Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in knowledge and spiritual practice, giving away as charity, control of the senses, sacrifice, reading of the scriptures, austerity, uprightness ;

Non-injuriousness, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, tranquillity, aversion to slander, compassion to beings, non-covetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness ;

Boldness, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, absence of pride ;—these belong to one born for leading a divine life.

BHAGAVAD GITA, CHAP. XVI.

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

(Continued from page 125)

## THE MASTER IN BHAVA MUKHA

*Second illustration—The Master's Statement about the Control of Lust*

**S**OON after some young men would probably come with a sorrowful heart and ask the Master, "Well, Sir, how to get rid of lust? Sensuous instincts and evil thoughts often arise and destroy the peace of mind in spite of all efforts to subdue them."

The Master: "Well, until a man attains to God-realisation, lust cannot be totally effaced. Even after the realisation of God, as long as the body remains, little traces of it will be lingering, but it cannot sprout up. Do you think I myself am absolutely free from it? Once I thought I had overcome the passion. But one day while I sat in Panchavati, the sexual instinct overwhelmed the mind with such a force that it was, as it were, hard for me to control myself. Then I began to cry out, rubbed my face against the ground, and prayed to the Mother, 'O Mother, I have committed a great blunder. Henceforth I shall never think that I have conquered lust.' Thus it was stopped. Well, you are now in the full flood of youth. So you cannot put a check to it. When the flood rises, can it be stopped by any

barrier? The water overflows with a great rush and accumulates to a considerable depth in the paddy fields. In the Kali Yuga, however, it is said mental commission of sin is nothing. If any evil thought happens to arise in the mind once or so, why should you set yourself a-thinking for the 'how' and 'why' of it? Now and then due to the tendencies implanted in all bodies by Nature those thoughts appear and disappear. Consider them to be merely like calls of Nature. Is anybody overwhelmed with anxiety simply because he was subject to a call of Nature? Look upon those thoughts as insignificant, abominable and of no importance, and never recall them to memory. Moreover, on such occasions earnestly pray to the Lord, repeat His names and reflect upon him. Never pay heed to the incoming or out-going of those thoughts. Gradually they will come to a stop." The Master would seem to live his youthful days once more in the presence of the young men.

*Third Illustration—Instruction to Yogananda regarding the same Topic.*

In this connection a story about Sj. Yogen comes to mind. Swami Yogananda, like whom persons

possessing control over the senses are scarcely to be met with, one day put the same question to the Master at Dakshineswar. He was then quite young, aged about fourteen or fifteen, and had been paying visits to the Master since few days only. At that time one Hatha Yogi by name Narayana was staying in a cottage near Panchavati at Dakshineswar and was arousing curiosity in the minds of some people by the performance of Yogic exercises such as '*Neti*', '*Dhouti*' etc.\* Yogen Swamiji told us that he was also one of the lot, and that after observing all those Yogic feats he thought within himself that lust might not be got rid of nor God-realisation achieved without those practices. So, with great expectation he put that question to the Master and believed that he would teach him some Yogic postures, advise him to take myrobalan fruits or such other things and give him some lessons on the practice of Pranayama. Yogen Swamiji told us: "In reply to my query the Master said, 'With intense feelings take the name of the Lord. Then you can be free from lust.' His words could not satisfy me in the least. I thought within myself, 'It is

because he does not know anything of Yogic practices that he speaks thus carelessly. Can mere repetition of Lord's name ever root out lust? If it can, why do not all the people who utter the name of the Lord become free from it? One day I came to the temple garden, went straight to the Hatha Yogi at Panchavati instead of visiting the Master at first, and was listening to the words of the Yogi with rapt attention. At that time the Master himself came to the place. On finding me there he called me, took hold of my hand and began to say while proceeding towards his dwelling room, 'Why did you go there? Don't go. If you learn all those things (Hatha Yogic practices) and try to practise them, the mind will be directed towards the body alone and not to God.' Hearing those words of the Master I pondered within myself, 'Lest I should forsake his company in future, he is giving this kind of instructions to me.' All along I had been cherishing a high opinion about the soundness of my intelligence. Swayed, as it were, by my faith in my own intelligence, I indulged in such thoughts. At that time it did not even occur to my mind that it was immaterial to the Master whether I came to him or not. Such an overcautious and suspicious turn of mind I had. It was only through the endless grace of the Master that I could win his love although such evil thoughts arose in my mind. Then I mused within myself, 'Why not I follow his words

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\* *Neti* consists in swallowing slowly a piece of wet cloth about one inch in breadth and ten cubits in length, and pulling it out again. *Dhouti* consists in drinking about two or three sours of water and vomiting it out. Sucking up water by the rectum and letting it out is also called *Dhouti*. The Hatha Yogis in this way remove the filthy matters of the body. They are of opinion that by these means the body can be made strong and free from disease.

and see what happens?' Thinking thus I began to repeat the name of the Lord with fullness of heart and intense fervour. Truly speaking, within a few days I experienced the same results as were predicted by the Master."

*Fourth Illustration Story of  
Manimohan's Lady Relative*

Thus there are many instances of the Master's capacity for penetrating into all the conditions of human life and grasping the inner thoughts of men. The story about Mallick Mahasaya of Sinduriapatti has already been narrated. One lady relative of his, who had a devotional bent of mind, used to come to the Master. One day she approached the Master much aggrieved, and told him that she was sorely vexed as some worldly thoughts or recollections of somebody else would come to her mind while meditating upon God. The Master at once grasped her inner feeling and came to know that she might have loved somebody whose life story and face were rising before her memory. So he asked her, "Whose face do you remember? Whom do you love in the world?" She replied that she was fondling her little nephew and rearing him up. The Master said, "All right, whatever you do for him in the way of feeding, or dressing, etc., do with the idea of rendering service unto Baby Krishna. Nurse him with the idea that the Lord in the form of Baby Krishna is within him and that you are

feeding, clothing and taking every care of Him. Why should you consider it to be a service to man? As you sow, so you reap." We are told that by carrying into practice the words of the Master, she acquired a good deal of mental upliftment within a few days and even attained to a higher plane of consciousness.

*The Master's Power of Grasping all  
the Mental Phases of Women*

As the Master belonged to the male sex, it was to some extent intelligible how he could enter into the inner thoughts of men. We become utterly astonished when we ponder how the Master could rightly understand all the moods of women who, being possessed of such feelings as tenderness of heart, filial affection and so on, have been endowed with one limb more than men. The lady devotees of the Master say, "We would not often take him to be a man. We would consider him to be one of our sex, as it were. So we would not feel any sort of delicacy before the Master, as we do in the case of others of the male sex. If such a feeling of shyness would ever appear in the mind, we would at once forget it and fearlessly open our hearts to him."

*Ascertainment of the Reason*

Was it so for the reason that the Master for a long time meditated upon the idea of being a handmaiden or a maidservant of the Lord Sri Krishna, got absorbed in that thought and totally forgot that

he was of the male sex? Patanjali in his Yoga Aphorisms says that if you can fully get rid of the mischievous tendency of mind, none in the world, even the tiger, the snake, etc., can any longer injure you. On seeing you, no harmful propensities will arise in their mind. As is the case with the instinct of malice, the same is to be accepted as holding good in regard to lust, anger, etc. We come across many instances of this fact in the Puranas. To cite one instance will be enough. The young Suka, guileless and unattached, being day and night immersed in Divine consciousness, had renounced the world. The old father, Vyasa, blinded by filial affection, was following him shouting aloud, "Where do you go?" On the way the heavenly maidens were engaged in ablution with their clothes put off on the banks of a lake. At the sight of Suka no feeling of delicacy or shyness arose in their mind. They were taking bath as before. But as soon as the old Vyasa appeared, all of them covered their body with clothes out of a sort of excitement. Vyasa thought thus: "How is it? My young son went ahead. But nobody moved a bit. I am an old man. At my sight so

much of bashfulness!" On his enquiring about the reason the maidens replied, "So pure is Suka that he is always poised in the thought of being the Atman. He is not at all conscious whether he is in possession of a male or a female body. So we did not feel ashamed to see him. You are an old man acquainted with the gestures, postures and feelings of women. And you have described at length their beauty and form. Like Suka you have not got the same-sightedness with regard to men and women alike, and you cannot have it. So, on seeing you, we felt that a male person is approaching us, and simultaneously a feeling of shyness arose in our mind."

In the case of the Master, exactly the same reason strikes our mind. His abiding self-knowledge and consciousness of the existence of one Self in all beings, male or female, would uplift every person to such a high plane of thought that as long as he would remain in his company, such ideas as 'I am a man' 'She is a woman' etc., would not occur to the mind. So it was quite natural that like men, women also did not feel any sort of delicacy before him.

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## SALVATION, INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL

**A**LTHOUGH religion has contributed much towards social stability, it has not however escaped from the accusation of fostering the spirit of individualism at the expense of social interests. Especially the modern critics of religion find it convenient to forget its services in creating a social sense, and direct their attacks at what they consider to be the unique feature of religion—*viz.*, the pre-occupation with the thought of the salvation of the soul and the consequent emphasis on the individual, and the tendency to neglect the wider life of society. Their line of argument is roughly this: Religions teach that every individual is an embodied soul that continues to exist eternally even after the death of the body. The prospect of an eternal *post mortem* existence shifts the individual's interest from the life of the society and directs it to such matters as are exclusively concerned with his own spiritual well-being. The salvation of the soul becomes the all-absorbing passion, and the question of promoting human happiness or improving the conditions of social life fade before it in importance. Hence a thinker like Bertrand Russell has criticised individual salvation as an aristocratic ideal, since it involves, as in the latter, a limitation of sympathy to the narrow interests of the self and consequent callousness to the misery of others. In democratic societies, he believes, such an ideal cannot flourish.

In as far as it disregards social interests, the idea of individual salvation is said to be in conflict with the modern conception of the Good Life. It is said that religious philosophies which emphasise upon individual salvation arose among people who were living under

extremely bad political and economic conditions. Though conscious of the undesirable nature of their social environment they felt powerless to rectify it, and found a fulfilment for their reforming zeal in cutting aloof from the vicious society and seeking for perfection in self-culture or in a world beyond. The Good Life, they believed, has nothing to do with this world, and the utmost that could be done here is to be a perfect individual in an imperfect world. But the modern conception of the Good Life differs from this in as far as it depends entirely upon the individual's connection with the society. The Good Life, according to Bertrand Russell, is a life inspired by love and guided by knowledge, and it is possible only in the midst of a multitude of social conditions. Love has two aspects—in the first place, pure delight in contemplation for the person who loves, and in the second, benevolence towards the person who is loved. A society approaches the ideal of the Good Life in so far as every member of it becomes a source of delight as well as benevolence to every other. Now, benevolence cannot be true benevolence unless it is guided by knowledge; for without its aid, a person who is sympathetically disposed towards another cannot understand what is really conducive to the interest of the latter, and even if he understands, may not be in a position to minister to his needs. Science alone is capable of giving that knowledge which can remove human wants, and science can flourish only in an organised society where capable individuals devote themselves to its cause in place of seeking the salvation of their souls. Moreover, the Good Life which the modern thinkers have in view, involves

much besides virtue. In Bertrand Russell's words, "To live a Good Life in the fullest sense a man must have a good education, friends, love, children, a sufficient income to keep him from want and grave anxiety, good health and work which is not uninteresting. All these things, in varying degrees, depend upon the community, and are helped or hindered by political events." Hence, he concludes that the Good Life can be lived only in a good society and is not possible outside it. It is said that in as far as the ideal of individual salvation comes into conflict with this modern notion of the Good Life, enlightened sections of mankind are giving it up in preference to the ideal of social salvation, the feasibility of which has been demonstrated by the progress of material science.

We have indicated above in brief the modern criticism of the ideal of individual salvation. When analysed it resolves itself into two contentions (1) that the ideal of individual salvation detracts a person's interest from social welfare; and (2) that it comes into conflict with the modern conception of the Good Life which is possible only in a good society. In answering this criticism it has first of all to be remarked that the relevancy or irrelevancy of these contentions can ultimately be settled only after a decisive reply is given to the question whether the human personality survives the body or perishes with its death. In the last resort, therefore, it depends upon metaphysics, since science is admittedly unable to give a final answer to any question relating to the ultimate facts of life. And as long as there is a strong metaphysical justification forthcoming in support of the survival of human personality, it is highly illogical to contend that the idea is not true because it does not conform to some of the social

conceptions of the day. Something cannot be proved to be untrue because it is inconvenient. So the ideal of individual salvation stands or falls only with the metaphysical argument in support of it.

But it is however possible to show that even the criticism based upon its supposed incompatibility with social interests is wholly beside the mark at least with regard to the Vedantic conception of salvation, individual and social. The critics seem to have in mind some of the theological views popularised by the ascetics of medieval Europe. In their view God was entirely separate from the world and society, and life in the latter helped only to the perdition of the soul. The only way of salvation lay in the ascetic rule of isolation from society, or if one was not strong enough to do it, in believing the doctrines of the Church and participating in the sacraments administered by it. Individual salvation was therefore largely conceived to stand in opposition to the salvation of the society. But in Vedanta the doctrine of the spiritual unity of the world with God gives a noble outlook on the world, and opens a new way of salvation in which the spiritual interests of the individual and material interests of the society become mutually dependent and complementary. The world, according to the Vedantic conception, is a manifestation of the Supreme Being in space and time, and does not stand in antithesis to Him. True, there is the non-spiritual element in it, but it is perceived only when we view the world as separate from and out of relation to its substratum, Brahman. In order to remind men of the spiritual background of the world, the Vedanta conceives the manifested universe as the body of Brahman and deifies it under the conception of Virat. All living beings are

conceived as part and parcel of the divine personality. A spiritual aspirant is asked to base his relation to the world on this idea and cultivate an attitude of worship and reverence to God manifested in living beings. At a more advanced stage the ideal of Sarvatma-bhava is placed before him—an ideal which teaches him to regard his own self as one with that of all beings.

Just as the world is conceived to be a manifestation of Brahman, so also society is viewed as part and parcel of the divine scheme. The Bhagavan's declaration in the Gita that the society with its fourfold division has been ordained by Him gives the clue to the Hindu conception of social ethics. The great Vedic hymn called Purusha Sukta, which describes the various social orders as having sprung from the Creator, is another evidence of the exalted conception the ancient Aryans had of society. It is true that selfish and conservative people have often made capital use of the scriptural declaration for perpetuating invidious distinctions and unwholesome practices, but when one views these great ideals leaving aside all ulterior motives, it can be understood clearly that their purpose is only to give an exalted view of social functions and create due regard for the body politic. If the Varnasrama Dharma has any claim to be looked upon as a spiritual law, it is only due to the recognition it gives to this principle. The economic interests and the racial motives that led to its peculiar organisation in the past do no longer hold good to-day, and the sooner India is able to rid herself of its sway in these respects the speedier she will emerge from her humiliating position. But the really eternal principle in its organisation is the reverential outlook it inculcates in the popular mind towards social duty, and modern

India and the world at large will only be poorer if this aspect of it is forgotten in the zeal for reform. According to this scheme every man has a place in society and has his duties to perform. The duty belonging to one's own station in life is known as Swadharma and the proper discharge of this Swadharma is the unavoidable condition of all spiritual illumination. Man can escape from Samsara only by the grace of God and this grace descends only on those who are pure in heart. According to Vedantic ideals purity of heart is attainable only through the conscientious discharge of one's Swadharma, and the conception of Swadharma includes, besides the improvement of individual character, the due fulfilment of one's duties towards society, as well. To the authentic religious books of Hinduism the idea of making salvation easy is unknown. Subservience to any dogma or profession of belief in any person does in no way assure one's spiritual welfare. The observance of a fast, the propitiation of a priest, offerings before images and pilgrimage to holy places are of no spiritual value, if the observances of these are undertaken by people as a short cut for salvation or as a substitute to the more difficult course of attending to one's Swadharma. God, according to Hindu scriptures, is pleased more by the honest and unostentatious contribution towards social welfare accompanied by the true sense of dedication and resignation, than by any so-called act of external piety. In short, no spiritual progress is possible without the proper discharge of Swadharma; for it is only in the hard school of duty that man learns the rare lesson of self-control and one-pointedness so essential for harnessing the inner forces of the human personality.

But what about the Sannyasin, it may be asked, does he not ignore the

social interests? It must be said, in the first place, that the life of Sannyas does not mark the beginning of spiritual life. Ordinarily it comes after one has discharged one's social duties and an undistracted hankering for the realisation of Truth has arisen in the mind. Where Sannyas precedes this, unselfish work conducive to social welfare cannot be avoided. Hence the Gita says that Sannyas is not the abandonment of work but the giving up of the fruits thereof. Besides, by being free from the bondage of social rules, the Sannyasin does not cease to be an active agent of social welfare. A true Sannyasin is always described as one devoted to the welfare of all beings (सर्वभूतहिते रतः). By his very presence in society he works for the highest social good. If he is freed from the binding force of rules and regulations, it is because of the presupposition that he is a man of regenerate character and does not therefore require the dictation of law-codes. Such men may exist in other orders of life also, but the Hindu Dharma has especially distinguished the Sannyasin in this way because it takes for granted that the members of this order have undergone a spiritual selection unlike those of other orders which form general schools of training for all mankind.

We have till now shown that the Hindu ideal of individual perfection does not rob the society of the services of its best individuals. The other point at issue is whether the ideal of individual salvation is antagonistic to the modern conception of the Good Life. We have pointed out that those who attack the former ideal do so on the ground that the Good Life according to it means only to cultivate certain subjective virtues whereas the modern notion of it means something different, viz., the creation of a good society. The Good

Life is possible only in a good society, and a good society means prosperity, health, satisfaction of desires and other enjoyable things of the world. Now, the Hindu socio-religious scheme based on Vedantic ideal does not stand in conflict with such a conception of the Good Life. Those who are conversant with the spirit of Hindu Sastras are aware of the conception of fourfold Purusharthas, consisting of Dharma (Virtue), Artha (Wealth), Kama (Desire) and Moksha (Emancipation). We have already pointed out before that the Hindu scriptures do not conceive of the path of salvation as commencing only with retirement from active work in society. Similarly, too, they do not regard these fourfold aims as mutually contradictory. The Mahabharata says: "It is said that Virtue is sought for the protection of the body and Wealth is for the acquisition of Virtue. Pleasure is only the gratification of the senses. All these have therefore the quality of passion. Virtue, Wealth and Pleasure, when sought for the sake of heaven and such other rewards, are said to be remote because the rewards themselves are remote. When, however, sought for the knowledge of the Self they are said to be proximate. One should seek them when they are of such a character; one should not cast them off even mentally (i. e., one should seek Virtue for only compassing purity of soul; Wealth in order that one may spend it in acts undertaken without desire of fruits; and Pleasure for supporting body)..... The aim of the triple aggregate is towards emancipation. Would that man could obtain it! Virtue's dross consists in desire for reward, the dross of Wealth consists in hoarding it: when purged of these impurities, they are productive of great results."

A correct idea of the conception of these fourfold objects of attainment

together with that of Swadharma forms a preliminary requisite for a true understanding of the Vedantic social philosophy. Hinduism recognises two distinct but complementary ideals for the guidance of life. There is the Pravritthi Marga or the path of action, which is based upon the recognition of the fundamental fact that the life of man and the world order based upon it are deeply rooted in desire. In the life of desire man is under the bondage of Nature, but there is something in him which revolts against the tyranny of Nature's bondage and yearns for the unrestricted freedom of an existence beyond the domain of laws. The life which is predominantly based upon the call for freedom in human nature is known as Nivritthi Marga or the path of emancipation, in contrast to the Pravritthi Marga which keeps man within Nature's laws and seeks to fulfil the demands of Nature in the shape of the desires of the body and the mind. In the Gita when the Bhagavan says, "He who has no enemy, who is friendly and compassionate to all beings, who is free from the feelings of 'I' and 'mine' and who is equally unruffled in pleasure and in pain", he refers to Nivritthi Marga; whereas he points to the Pravritthi Marga when he exhorts, "Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pritha! It does not befit thee. Abandoning this despicable weakness of heart, do thou stand up and fight," or when he commands, "By fighting do thou gain fame. Having conquered thine enemies enjoy this plentiful kingdom. These have indeed been slaughtered by me already; do thou be but the instrument in this matter."

Though the duties of people engaged in these two paths differ, there is no opposition between them. For just as in the case of the life of the student

and the citizen, here also Hinduism recognises the one to be the preparation and the other the fulfilment. The Nivritthi Marga is placed before one in whom the call for freedom has become more urgent than the demand of desires for satisfaction. But he in whom the former predominates is asked to pursue the Pravritthi Marga for the attainment of the first three of the Purusharthas—Dharma, Artha and Kama. Of these Kama is the most fundamental, for in the words of the Mahabharata, "Both Virtue and Wealth are based upon Desire. It is under the influence of Desire that the very Rishis devote themselves to penance..... Traders, agriculturists, keepers of cattle, artists, artisans and those who are engaged in the rites for propitiation, all act from Desire." But the satisfaction of desires is sanctioned, not because it is in itself the end, but because it is a stage, a necessary stage, in the case of the majority of men. For the call of freedom can gain strength in the human mind only after it has been strongly impressed by the hollowness of enjoyments, both of the world and of heavenly regions. This is called Vairagya or the absence of desires, and forms one of the essential disciplines required for perfection. The idea of Vairagya does not carry any implication that desires and their satisfaction are in themselves sinful; it signifies only that the satisfactions derived from them are transitory and are attended by unpleasant reactions. When this consciousness has strongly arisen in the mind, man feels no inclination for a life devoted to the gratification of desires.

But such a feeling can grow in most men only when they have tasted some of the enjoyments and have realised their hollowness from actual experience. Hence the Hindu Sastras regard the path of emancipation as a fulfilment of

the life of desires, and try to get over the opposition that seems to exist between them. The true significance of this combination can be understood only when we consider Desire in relation to the two other Purusharthas Dharma and Artha. Artha or Wealth is the means for the attainment of Desire, and Dharma gives the guidance needed for steering man through Wealth and Desire to the goal of Emancipation. Hence Dharma or the knowledge of virtuous conduct is to be acquired in the first place, and man's endeavour to gain Pleasure and Wealth are to be guided by it. Satisfaction of desires in the light of Dharma, i.e., with due sense of propriety, discrimination and regard for the ultimate end, is only a stage in the path of emancipation and an indirect means to it. Therefore the Bhagavan says in the Gita, "In all beings I am Desire which is not opposed to Dharma."

Now, a society based on such a conception of life overcomes the supposed opposition between individual salvation and the modern notion of the Good Life. For if Dharma, Artha, and Kama are recognised to be legitimate, society must regulate itself in such a way that its members may obtain as much opportunity for these preliminary attainments as for the final end. A vigorous and active social life for the acquirement of all those objects required for the Good Life that Bertrand Russell speaks of—friends, wealth, health, children, education and the rest—becomes justified in the light of an ultra-mundane ideal, viz., emancipation. Neither wealth nor health is in itself a vice, they become so only when used for purposes that are anti-social and, therefore, unspiritual.

The Vedantist, however, goes one step further, and says that there is not only no opposition between indi-

dual perfection and social salvation, but that the latter is in a sense vitally dependent on the former. It is only when one is good that one can do good to others. It is only when one is pure and unselfish that one can devote oneself whole-heartedly to the welfare of others. The so-called champions of social good, who undertake the work of redeeming society without any thought of redeeming themselves, often do more harm than good to the body they profess to regenerate. For unless character is formed and man's motives are purified—and this is not possible without conscious effort for individual perfection—it is absolutely certain that selfish purposes will interfere and spoil the good works that one may be contemplating in mind. Hence, one can be a true servant of society only in proportion to the perfection of one's own character, and a society can give birth to genuine agents of its own welfare only in case the ideal of individual perfection also is sufficiently stressed. The tragedy of the modern world is due to the unhealthy separation between these two ideals. Knowledge and love, Bertrand Russell says, are to be combined for realising the Good Life, but how can there be love unless the regeneration of individual character on a spiritual basis is sufficiently emphasised? In modern times man has pushed his way in quest of knowledge with unprecedented success, but has not shown an equal zeal in cultivating the virtues of the heart. Hence we find that for every scientific discovery of humane significance, more than one of a purely destructive nature is made; and men too are seen not loath to use these when it is advantageous for them to do so. It is said the invention of gunpowder and modern warfare had removed the fear of barbarian invasions

from the plains of Central Asia, but until thinkers give up harping upon this artificial distinction between individual and social salvation, and recognise

the spiritual potentialities of man civilisations shall continue to live in dread of barbarism threatening *from within*.

## THE VEDANTA IN THE MAKING

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**T**HE genetic study of the Vedanta in its historical affiliations unmistakably points to the hymns of the Rigveda as containing the germinal beginnings of the Vedanta. Although there is scarcely to be found a more sympathetic expositor of the hymns of the Rigveda than Max Muller of hallowed memory, his characterisation of the Rigveda as 'the babbling of child-humanity,' when read out of its context, may appear to have made no allowances for all the crudity and immaturity that must necessarily belong to all embryonic existences in a state of gestation. One need not go the whole length with the poet in acclaiming the child as 'the best philosopher,' 'mighty prophet' or 'seer blest'; but with a little exercise of sympathetic imagination, one might discern in this so-called 'babbling' the primeval utterance of those truths 'which we are toiling all our lives to find.' It is no wonder, then, that the average critic in whom this gift of sympathetic understanding is conspicuous by its absence will discover in the Rigveda nothing but the symptoms of a low and degenerate type of civilisation in which the entire gamut of animism, spiritism, ancestor worship and the like is traversed, along with the constant concomitance of a prevailing polytheism, bringing in their train the worst form of sacerdotalism and priestly tyranny. In spite of a child-like naivete characterising most of the prayers, a

sunny pagan temperament, breathing a light-hearted joyousness in all its utterances, and the somewhat riotous fancy displayed in the creation of gods, the hymns of the Rigveda do, for the most part, reveal a philosophical frame of mind, alike in the history of the individual and that of the race. If doubt, or what is the same thing, wonder in the Platonic sense, is to be regarded everywhere as the parent of all philosophy, a philosophic doubt makes its penetrative appeal in and through that famous 'Hymn to the Unknown God' (divested, of course, of the Pauline associations as found in the *Acts*) which may, with strict justice, be taken to be symptomatic of the whole spirit of the Rigveda. Distracted by innumerable calls on his allegiance to the Gods of the Vedic pantheon, the Rigvedic thinker, in a mood of sceptical despair, has insistently harped on the strain—(कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम) to what God shall we offer our oblation? One need not be anxious for a defence of philosophic doubt as expressed herein; for, it has its logical as well as historical justification. It is not that doubt which paralyses all inquiry at the very start, but is, strictly speaking, a methodological doubt, which as the indispensable prelude to all inquiry, has everywhere proved so fruitful in the service of a philosophic construction. Viewed in its historical perspective, it stands at the cross-ways of two competing trends of thought. It heralds on

the one hand 'the twilight of the gods', and on the other the dawning of a new era of philosophic earnestness which at once revealed the main drift and crowning achievement of Rigvedic speculation. Verily, 'the owl of Minerva takes its flight only when the shades of night are gathering'. It is not, assuredly, a doubtful adventure or excursion of the intellect, but is in itself the attainment of a stable ground on the way to further advance along this line. If the sole claim of Thales to be reckoned the first philosopher on the soil of Europe consists, not ostensibly in his enunciation of 'water' to be the primordial source or matrix of all things, but in the honest attempt that he made to trace, in his own crude way, the diversity of our experience to a unitary principle, in flagrant opposition to the explanations of current polytheism, then surely the effort after philosophic comprehension that is made in this very Hymn entitles its author to a more respectful consideration. Take, for example, the beautiful line—('यस्य छायामृतं यस्य मृत्युः') ['The being whose shadow is immortality as well as mortality (i. e., deity and humanity)]—which impresses us as much by the elegance of its expression as by the depth of its insight; and we cannot help admiring the first fruits of the effort at comprehension. Thus the sceptical mood that is characteristic of some of the later hymns of the Rigveda does not land us in bare negation, but has some solid achievement to its credit. Even Prof. Keith who can never be accused of extravagant enthusiasm for Indian philosophy in general, and for Rigveda in particular, is not slow to acknowledge the value of this achievement. Premising that 'philosophy in India shows its beginnings as often in the expression of scepticism (as

in its 'earliest poetry'), he proceeds to observe that 'the positive side of the tendency of the Rigveda to dissatisfaction with the gods of tradition is to be seen in the assertion of the unity of the gods and of the world. When all is said and done, this is the one important contribution of the Rigveda to the philosophy of India. It asserts as a norm for the future development of that thought the effort to grasp more concretely and definitely the unity, which it asserts as a fact, but which it does not justify or explain in detail.'<sup>1</sup>

The prolific myth-making of the Rigveda, again, is often made a target of attack by its critics. For better or for worse the first flutter of the new-fledged philosophic impulse on the Indian soil clothed itself in poetry of unending charm, with an abundance of myths, as the machinery just meant for the purpose, standing to the credit of a fertile imagination or creative phantasy, native to the soil. This character of early Indian speculation, by no means uncommon in the history of speculative thought in other lands, attests *inter alia* the truth of *Vico's* dictum that 'poetry is the first operation of the human mind.' It is not merely on that account that the poetic or mythological garb of 'the earliest poetry of India' which 'already contains many traces of the essential character of the philosophy of India'<sup>2</sup> is to be justified. 'In nothing, indeed, as we have it on Prof. Keith's authority, 'does the continuity of Indian life show itself more strikingly than in this : the gods of India change, but the alteration of the higher thought is far less marked.'<sup>3</sup> Nor need one be apolo-

<sup>1</sup> The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads, pp. 433, 434.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 433.

<sup>3</sup> Loc. cit.

getic at all for the poetic or mythical representation of philosophical truths as systematically carried out in the Rigveda. Even the purists among dialecticians, while labelling the myths of Plato as mere lacunae or lapses in his otherwise rigorous logic, have yet to acknowledge that there is in all of these a rich kernel of truth concealed under what is mere myth. The relation of the two, viewed in a time-perspective, may pithily be expressed by saying that the myth is but truth in the making. But there is no denying the fact that a poetic or mythical representation of philosophical doctrines at the present day would at once be tabooed as being a matter of historical anachronism. Even Plato refers in the *Republic*<sup>1</sup> to an 'old feud between poetry and philosophy', and condones the 'noble untruth' of poetry and the imitative arts in general, in so far as they tend to lead one astray from the strict pursuit of truth. The so-called 'feud' to which he refers is an interesting study in psycho-analysis. It is only an objectification of a crisis in his mental history, precipitated by a growing conflict between the two fundamental tendencies of his nature. For, it is no mere exaggeration to say that Plato was primarily and temperamentally a poet, but a philosopher by profession. However paradoxical it might sound, it is not so in point of fact; and a deeper reading in Plato is sure to confirm this analysis. When, therefore, he was ordaining the exile of the poets from his "Ideal Republic" he did not know—such was the irony of the situation—that he was thereby signing the warrant of his own extradition from the Ideal State. Indeed, much of the authority that attaches to Plato's pronouncements on the 'first truths' is due to the dual role in which he appears, and

the double voice with which he speaks. If, as the poet Yeats believes, 'whatever of philosophy has been made poetry is alone permanent', there could be found no more apt illustration of the point than in the case of Plato. As a matter of fact, a philosophical doctrine, in order to insure its perpetuity, must see that it is integral to a 'vision' or synoptic view of the whole; then and then only can it hope to survive, as does for Browning's melodist 'the passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky'. Truly, it is Plato, the poet, that conceived or had the vision of a world of Ideas or archetypal Forms; it is Plato, the philosopher, that sought to justify the vision with reference to the things of sensible experience. And that is exactly the reason why the Platonic vision of a world of Ideas has come to stay as a classical inheritance of mankind, while his teachings about 'fixed stars' or 'future retribution' have become matters of antiquarian research. But the issue in this regard is not merely staked on accidents of history; it is one involving a question of principle. The principle in question is no other than the one underlying Wordsworth's description of poetry as 'the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge'. There are many who would stoutly refuse to be convinced by an *ipse dixit* of this kind. But they might as well, without dogmatising, reckon with the fact that truth does not come to us on the crutches of dialectic, but is seized in a moment of rapt contemplation by reason in its synthetic activity or what is the same thing by 'imagination' in the Wordsworthian sense, which is but 'reason in its most exalted mood.' Thus, the poetic or mythical garb of the hymns of the Rigveda has *prima facie* nothing to invalidate their truth-claim.

<sup>1</sup> Book X.

It would be, however, carrying things too far to accept the myths, all and sundry, as bearers of deep philosophy import, and to read into the hymns, individually, a meaning which, on the strength of historic as well as textual criticism, does not appear to be at all plausible. Such is more or less the procedure of an accredited exponent of the Advaita-Vedanta School in recent times,<sup>1</sup> so far as he discredits the so called plurality of the Vedic deities accepted on the basis of their different functions, and discerns in the Rigveda, from the very first hymn unto the last, a sustained message of unity, of a clear-cut *Advaitism*. By way of substantiating his *bona fide*, he selects the very first hymn of the Rigveda—"I glorify Agni, the high-priest of the sacrifice, the divine, the ministrant, who presents the oblation (to the Gods) and is the possessor of great wealth" (अग्निमीले पुरोहितं यज्ञस्य देवमृत्विजं होतारं रत्नधातमं). It is not on this solitary peg that he rests his theory, but seeks to fortify further his position by culling out hymns that ostensibly bear the interpretation desired. Admittedly, the Rigveda as a heterogeneous aggregate (*Samhita*) of hymns, traceable to successive generations of thinkers and distinct levels or strata of thought,—which, by the way, is an accredited conclusion of critical researches in the Rigveda,—offers an admirable scope for such a policy of selection. Although this characteristic appears in *excelsis* in the Rigveda, it is an outstanding feature of all development in the cultural history of India. The synchronism of the earlier and the later, and the resulting syncretism in the Rigveda spring from the method of superimposition or comprehension by inclusion, which is just the method

of racial accretion by incorporation of alien ethnic stocks. The formula of all such development, if development at all it can be called, is not the emergence of the later by way of incorporating what is of value in the earlier till at last the climax is reached in a consummate value, but is one in which each succeeding stage, instead of negating or ousting the preceding one, is superimposed on the latter. This also accounts for the Rigvedic repetitions that seldom fail to strike the discerning reader. Accordingly, there is considerable risk, in the face of the synchronous appearance of polytheistic and monotheistic passages in the Rigveda, of assigning primacy to the latter and explaining away the former as being the view point of the unphilosophical. This can only be secured, as it has been evidently done, by way of a systematic supersession of the plain meaning in favour of the implied. This is, for one thing, forcing facts on the Procrustean bed of preconceived theories or metaphysical predilections on the part of the interpreter : and, besides, it is suggestive of a wide gulf between the philosophical and the unphilosophical, the *paramarthika* and the *vyavaharika*, the esoteric and the exoteric, in the domain of knowledge—a class-distinction which in the democracy of knowledge cannot be suffered to hold its own. Truly viewed, the *vyavaharika* is but the *paramarthika* in the making ; for, strictly speaking, knowledge is always of Reality or the *paramartha*, and, therefore, all intellectual progress is not one from ignorance or unthinking activity to knowledge or reflective thought, but is a progress in knowledge. If science, or philosophy for the matter of that, be a criticism of common sense, it is always to be viewed as a self-criticism or as an immanent criticism—the criticism in question being never

<sup>1</sup> e.g., Pandit Kokileswar Sastri in his *Advaitavada*

superinduced *ab extra*. The defence of rigid Advaitism that seeks to ensure an easy success by way of an initial separation between the *vyavaharika* and the *paramarthika*, and a proleptic use of the category of 'end', is foredoomed to failure. It may have the merit of simplicity to commend itself; but it is essentially lacking in that historic sense which has its relative importance and use in the study of the Rigveda, that is, intrinsically, not so simple as it is sometimes made out to be. The attempt obviously proceeds upon the maxim that the Vedanta, and in particular its essence, Advaitism, is implanted in the Veda ("वेद वेदान्तः सुप्रतिष्ठितः") but it construes the principle with a

literalness that strikes at the very root of all development. Indeed, it is not possible, within the meaning of the law of development, to have the flower along with the fruit, for the simple reason that the decay of the flower is the condition of the appearance of the fruit. The attempt in question, 'as typical of the absolutist's Absolute which 'has no seasons, but all at once bears its leaves, fruit and blossoms',<sup>1</sup> evinces a constitutional impatience for all process of growth or movement; for, we are told, 'nothing perfect, nothing genuinely real, can move'.

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1. Bradley: *Appearance and Reality* (2nd Ed.) P. 500

(To be continued)

## SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA, SANNYASIN AND TEACHER

By Sister Devamata

### IV

SOMEWHAT bombastic Pundit spent an hour at the monastery one late afternoon. When he had gone, Swami Ramakrishnananda remarked with a shade of displeasure in his voice: "When a man is vain on account of his learning, what does he gain? Even if he has read all the Vedas, he is not qualified to know the Truth. Real learning is that which will enable a man to realize the Truth. As our Master used to say, repeating "Sadham, Sadham (rice, rice)" will not appease your hunger; so repeating the texts of books will not appease your spiritual hunger. Your hunger will be satisfied only when you see God. Intellectuality and spirituality are diametrically opposed to each other. Intellectuality is based on ego and spirituality

is based on annihilation of ego. A man who is very shrewd and clever and asserts his opinions will never realise God; for that means he is full of egotism, and until egotism is destroyed, he cannot begin to be spiritual."

The Swami did not undervalue the use of intellect; but he showed little tolerance toward that superficial form of intellectuality which consists in mere information about things and knowledge borrowed from books. He believed a man's knowledge should rest on his own experience, not on the experience of others. He was a deep student of the human mind, regarding it as the pivot on which the spiritual life swung. "There is no difference between the purified mind and the true Self of man," he declared. "The mind is pure when it is single, that is, when

it is devoted to one object. If you wish to see God, the only way is to get rid of all selfish desires and make the mind single."

Some one asked, "How can we make the mind pure?" "Try to get rid of the ego by cultivating a sense of oneness," the Swami replied. "Think you are in no way superior to any living being, that the smallest insect crawling there is just as you are, and has just as much right to live. When we lose all sense of separateness, egotism will go, the mind will become single or pure, and only God will be there. The mind is like a mirror. When it is clean, it gives a perfect reflection; but if it is covered with dust, it gives no reflection at all. The more you can wipe off the dust, the better the reflection you will get. Every mind can be a reflector of eternal Truth, but the simple mind reflects it more clearly. To such a mind Truth is much more conceivable and visible than to a mind which has been given a definite shape by much reading and study."

Swami Ramakrishnananda himself was gifted with a remarkable mind. He possessed the power of original thought to an unusual degree and had also many intellectual attainments; but he made no display of his learning, nor did he allow it to overshadow his spiritual vision. Religion was his vocation; his intellectual pursuits were his recreation. He was an able mathematician and would solve a problem in trigonometry as he might sit down to a game of chess; and a difficult passage in a Sanskrit text was to him what a book of adventure would be to a young boy. He was one of the best Sanskrit scholars in the Order and could converse in it, when no other medium of communication was available. I myself heard him talk in Sanskrit with some South Indian

Pundits one afternoon at the Monastery.

His knowledge of the language made it possible for him to acquire an exceptional understanding of the Vedas and all Indo-Aryan sacred literature. One evening in speaking of the delight of Scriptural study, he exclaimed with enthusiasm: "The Upanishads are the most wonderful books. One should learn Sanskrit in order to be able to grasp their true meaning. They are a concise statement of all the great truths of the universe. Every line is the expression of a mind that has realised. Those who gave them out had realised God, and he who has realised God is the same as God Himself. Those great Seers were the embodiment of purity, so they were able to perceive all Truth." The Swami, however, did not limit himself to Indo-Aryan Scriptures. He knew well the Scriptures of other peoples and other faiths, and felt profound reverence for all alike. "Every nation," he declared, "has its Scriptures through which God has pointed out how to reach Him."

Swami Ramakrishnananda always believed that it was his knowledge of Sanskrit which constituted his chief qualification for the South Indian work. "It was because I knew a little Sanskrit and was a strict vegetarian that Swamiji sent me to Madras," he said to me one day. He often talked to me of those early days. They were full of hardship, but he seemed to glory in the self-denial they demanded. He lived alone in a small house he had hired for the work. It was barren of furniture and sometimes almost barren of food. In the rainy season the last stretch of road leading to it was so bad that bullock-cart drivers would refuse to travel it, when, for a small fare, they brought him from some distant point in the city. After a long day of lecturing

and teaching, he would have to walk in a drenching rain, wading at certain places through water more than knee-deep. When he reached the house, wet and tired, he would cook the evening offering and perform Puja, before eating his own meal and lying down to rest. Later he moved to the basement of the Ice House, which had been converted into a dwelling; and from there to the Monastery at Mylapore. Although severely plain and simple, both in structure and furnishings, it seemed almost luxurious compared with what had gone before.

Whether on his way he met hardship or ease mattered little to the Swami. He never relaxed his ardour. With the same unflagging devotion he continued to meditate and to pray, to serve and to teach, to worship and to study. His study was more interior than outer. The book he read most frequently was the book of his own mind. He delved into its depths and forced it to yield up its secrets. Thus he was able to reach his own solution for "many psychological problems. The results of these direct observations were mostly wordless, too subtle to put into words; but occasionally he spoke of them. I remember one evening, when several of us were present in the Monastery hall, he began: "Why do we want to know? To satisfy something in ourselves. The end of all knowledge is satisfaction and this satisfaction is always one. There are three kinds of knowing,—first instinctive knowledge, then reasoning, and then inspiration. The lower animals have instinct; much of our knowledge also is instinctive. Then man begins to reason, and as long as he reasons, the ego must be there. From reasoning he can pass on to inspiration, when all knowledge will come to him—not through the process of reasoning, but by direct illumination. All slavery comes to an end when man realises Truth."

"Remaining in the mind, you will never get away from doubt," he continued. "How long do you think? As long as there is a doubt in your mind. When you have reached a definite conclusion about a thing, you cease to think about it; so thinking and doubting are synonymous. If you make much of mind, you make much of doubt. People are sceptics, why? Because they make much of this little mind. But the mind never directs a man properly. Go beyond the mind and you will go beyond all doubt. Inside the body there is desire and greed; inside the mind there is doubt; inside the world there is change, there is death. Go beyond these and you will find peace and bliss. Until you go beyond them, you can never realise what peace and bliss mean."

Some one asked, "If we go beyond the mind, do we give up the habit of discrimination?" "To be able to go beyond the mind is the result of the highest discrimination," was the Swami's incisive answer. Another visitor asked, "Do we go beyond the mind in sleep?" "In sound sleep, yes," the Swami replied. "How do we remember our dreams?" was asked again. "When you fall asleep and dream, you lose the consciousness of your physical body, but you do not lose consciousness of your Self. That occupies your consciousness and records the dream." "How can we overcome the restlessness of the mind?" "By fixing it on God. As long as it goes out to the world through the senses, it will be restless and the mind will be weak. The more a mind is restless, the weaker it is; the more it is calm, the stronger it is." Then he added with emphasis, "Light the fire of wisdom in your mind and heart, and nothing weak or impure will dare approach you. When that fire is kindled all imperfections and impurities are burned to ashes."

## THE VICISSITUDES OF THE KARMA DOCTRINE

*By H. D. Bhattacharyya, M. A., B. L., (P. R. S.), Darsanasagara*

WE shall pass on now to consider an aspect of the Karma doctrine which has been more acceptable to popular faith for a variety of reasons, although popular belief has at no time discarded altogether the rigid interpretation of the moral law as governing all personal actions. An early acknowledgment of the vicarious functioning of the moral law was necessitated by the fact that the Vedic hymns were soon put into ritualistic practice, even if they were not sophisticated to a certain extent in the Vedic times themselves. Some of the rituals were very elaborate indeed and required the assistance of a number of persons and a large store of materials. The Mantras too had to be chanted in a definite order and the meaning of some of these had already begun to be obscure to the performers, and fanciful derivations and mystic meanings were attached to them. The ordinary householder or a rich patron of the sacrificial cult found himself at sea in such matters, and as some of the rites were periodical and practically compulsory, and others had in view definite objectives interesting to all members of the society, means had to be found to keep the gods in one's favour for heavenly blessing and earthly prosperity. We need not enter here into the vexed question of the origin of the caste system or why the other two twice-born castes gradually abandoned their rights in matters sacrificial in favour of the Brahmins; but the fact remains that in course of time only one class found itself in possession of the knowledge of the technique of sacrifice and was approached

for help through the labyrinthine details of a costly sacrificial programme with its innumerable Mantras to be faultlessly uttered, its minutiae of materials or their suitable substitutes whenever necessary, its attendant physical hardships and the scrupulous care with which the successive stages had to be performed. Presumably, also, the preoccupations of life had increased in the meantime, and the people had been losing the tradition of a hard nomadic existence. The patriarchal form of society, even if it had existed at one time, had certainly disappeared and the head of the family was not also its priest just as he was not its warrior in all cases. The Vaisyas were the first to lose contact with the scriptures, and although the Kshatriyas spasmodically asserted their right to perform the sacrifices on their own independent account, they were being increasingly drawn to settled habitation and land-owning and founding cities for protection and comfort. The Brahmins, still nomadic to a certain extent in their outlook upon life and placing more reliance upon cattle than upon landed property for sustenance and sacrifice alike, lived a little apart from busy towns and could retain that aloofness and that distinctiveness which bring prestige and reverential awe in their train. They monopolised in course of time the entire sacrificial cult, and even when speculative problems began to interest both Brahmins and Kshatriyas, the tradition of which is preserved in the Upanishads, the older method of spiritual advancement did not disappear altogether, although its application was

now confined to a special class, and whosoever had need of it had to seek the help of that class. That this supremacy of the Brahmins was not lightly accepted may be proved by the fact that in both Buddhistic and Jaina traditions, as well as in the Upanishads, the Brahmins are shown as inferior to the warrior caste in spiritual illumination in spite of their superiority in sacrificial performances.

The truth is that whatever might have been the rivalry between the two highest castes the cult of sacrifice never fell into disuse completely, and so the caste that had possession of the right of dictating the procedure had an undoubted advantage. Who would lose the benefit of a costly worship through pride in one's own power? The Brahmin was near at hand to see to it that everything passed off smoothly: after all, it is better to entrust an expert with the task of conducting the sacrifice when the reward was heaven or earthly prosperity. Thus was introduced the system of delegated authority in the performance of sacrifices in which the pay-master was the rich *yajamana* (client) and the Brahmin was the religious hireling who now made a profession out of his knowledge and his practical skill. It would be doing the Brahmin an injustice to think that he was a mercenary who ran no risk and was a gainer whether his client was saved or damned by his errors of omission and commission. He had to bear the sin of default through ignorance or carelessness, and he transferred all the merit of the religious work to his principal by his professional undertaking. Thus was laid the foundation stone of the system of vicarious enjoyment of the fruits of good action, which was destined to play such an important part in the later history of the Karma doctrine. There was one

other transfer that was almost automatic, and that is when a number of persons combined together to perform a complicated worship which could not be done by a single person. Here all shared in the merit of the rest by mutual transfer. But in the case of the former kind an express transfer was probably necessary and the later method of *samkalpa* in the name of another (initial expression of intention to benefit another) and using the *paramaipada* (for others) instead of *atmanepada* (for self) suffix in verbs was supposed to effect a transfer of merit automatically to the principal, the priest using the personal form of address exactly as a lawyer uses it for his client in a modern court of law and exactly for the same reason, namely, that the procedure is complicated and the laws are innumerable in number, out of which a proper and methodical selection has to be made for presentation to the judge.

It should be mentioned, however, that this transfer of merit was more or less confined within the realms of religious practice and not extended to the moral domain. Men still continued to reap the fruits of their own action and did not share in the harmful results of the misdemeanour of others by transfer, although provision was made to benefit them through vicarious performance of religious acts. The only real inroad upon this personal requital was made by the theory of *Sraddha* which in a sense negated the aspect of personal suffering. The strict moral law can possibly leave no place for benefit accruing from vicarious performance of religious acts; and yet the theory of *Sraddha* is based on this very fact that it is possible to do good to a departed person's soul by the offering of *pindas*. We need not go deep into the problems connected with funerary rites and oblations

offered to the *manes*: it is certain that they are half offerings made to secure the favour of the departed Fathers and half offerings made to benefit them. On the one hand, it was supposed that the fathers are in a pleasant abode, and that they would lose their strength and fall if periodical offerings were not made by their descendants (whence the dread of the extinction of the line, the system of adoption and the disposal of property according to the right of offering *Pindas*), and on the other there is a belief that the departed are not very happy and that they are waiting eagerly for the birth of a son in the line, who would release them from the desolate life they lead by the offering of *Pindas* at *Gaya*. Possibly in the minds of the theorists there was a distinction between the bad and the good *Pretas*, and the two destinies were meant for two separate classes; but that the matter was not clearly thought out can be proved by the fact that the philosophers contemplated a return of such souls, as had not been released by illumination, at the end of a definite period measured by the amount of personal merit acquired here below, and did not make any provision for the prolongation of this period through filial intercession or for the necessity of it at all. An original lot of Fathers, again, appears as a definite creation in the *Puranas*, and 'to be gathered unto the fathers' seems to have been taken literally in the sense that the departed join this original band. At other times the three generations are supposed to be transformed into *Vasus*, *Rudras* and *Adityas*—the three classes of demi-gods who, with *Agni*, *Indra* and *Varuna* at their head respectively and like the *Maruts* and the *Saddhyas*, thrive upon the nectarine rays of the sun and do not seem to be dependent upon gifts from below for their sustenance. Like

the *Yakshas*, *Rakshasas*, *Gandharvas* and *Siddhas*, these Fathers receive homage from men, as the gods do, although the method of approaching them is slightly different.

It is certain, however, that this aspect of their character did not make so much appeal as the other aspect, namely, that they are souls in bondage and that filial piety may redeem them by works of public utility or of offering of *Pindas* at proper times and in proper places. Just as in Roman Catholicism there can be a celebration of Mass for benefiting souls in Purgatorio, so also in Hinduism offerings made to benefit the departed have a beneficial effect, and thus a departed spirit may reap the fruits of action performed by others. When once the system gripped the popular imagination there was no limit to which it was supposed to go to benefit earlier generations. The birth of a son itself saves one from *punnama* hell apart from the question of funeral oblations—a theory that probably gained an impetus from the large-scale withdrawal from the world under the influence of Buddhism in opposition to the injunction in *Manu* that the *Grihastha* is the fountain-head of all *Asrama* and to the theory that a daughter unmarried in the family drags the whole body of departed fathers down.

From *Pindas* to works of public charity the transition was easily made and in later literature emphasis is laid on the utility of such works in relation to the departed. So it could be believed in later times that in order to ensure eternal felicity for one's ancestors (*akshayaśvargakama*) one could dedicate this or that work of charity to the use of the public. The Buddhists too laid down that a *Preta* could be redeemed by gifts made by others to *Sramanas* and *Sanghas* for its benefit, and thus recognised the possibility of vicarious

performance of meritorious acts. Of course, Buddhism had started with the assumption that Karma was never confined to the personality of the performer, as its *Anatmayada* (the doctrine of non-soul) never accepted the continuance of the same soul for reaping the fruits of action and was indirectly responsible for treating Karmic energy as a constant that might pass from unit to unit by transfer; but in its *Preta*-theory it was practically on all fours with the Hindu belief and postulated the continuance of the same soul in bondage and provided for its escape through the kindly acts of charity performed by others for its benefit.

But while benefit and injury could mount up, it was less seldom held that they could travel down. Still, occasional references to the sins of fathers visiting sons are to be met with: they travel down like hereditary diseases and affect the destinies of descendants. If the sins have not been expiated by the performers of the dark deeds, their sons and grandsons must suffer to square the account, for in the realm of moral justice no amount of sin can be annihilated without corresponding suffering. But the general position is that such transfer is rare and that it is the doer of the deed that must reap the fruits in successive embodiments, the difficulty of which conception we have already seen in the earlier part of the paper. Ratnakara's (*Valmiki's*) parents and wife do not share the sins he incurred by way-laying persons for livelihood, and *Puru* could take on the infirmities of *Yayati* only by voluntary consent. So in spite of the close relationship between parents and children they lead a life of perfect moral isolation and make and mar their own destiny without reference to the other.

In this respect a closer relation was supposed to exist between husband and

wife. When women lost their independent right of performing sacrifices, and marriage was regarded as their sole sacrament, they had to be given the right to share the religious merits of their husbands with whom they formed one personality by marriage; so they came to be regarded as *sahadharmini* or *sahadharma-charini*, not only in the sense of joining them in religious worship but also in the sense of sharing the merits of their husbands howsoever accrued. Similarly, they could benefit their husbands by *sahamarana*, for it would be absurd to suppose that they died only to share the realms, good or bad, to which their husbands would repair—the implication being rather that they would claim at the time when the husbands would be judged for their own merits the spiritual reward of having died along with them. A husband would similarly fail to get his religious reward by refusing to share his religious performances with his wife when these required her assistance. But even here the extreme limits were not reached, and it was never forgotten that the husband and the wife formed separate personalities, and that each was responsible for his or her actions, an unchaste wife, for instance, going to hell without dragging her husband down there or otherwise suffering for the same as *Ahalya* did.

Minor transfers were also known in the political field. The king's virtues and vices were reflected in the woe and woe of his subjects, and a land where premature death, flood, famine, drought, epidemic diseases and such wide-spread calamities occurred must be regarded as being ruled over by an undutiful king. Thus if a *Sudra* performs a sacrifice, a *Brahmin's* son will die prematurely—this is the burden of the story of *Sambuka* in *Uttararama-charitam*. Conversely, when the king

rules well the land flows with plenty, and his merits benefit his subjects in all ways. The kingly duty of punishment was so paramount that if the king forgave a thief, he had to take over his sins in order to release him from the burden. But the king too had his rewards vicariously brought, as when he shared the sixth part of the merit of sages in lieu of material dues levied from the laity. An automatic transference of merit was also supposed to operate in the social field when a guest failed to receive hospitality, and, leav-

ing the burden of sin on the unmindful host, took away his merits. The earliest version of this is to be found in the Brahmana story of Nachiketas and Yama, where Nachiketas fed on the merits of Yama as he failed to get due hospitality on account of the latter's absence from home for three days. We need not refer here to the stories of Chyavana, Satyavan and Markandeya, where benefit came from divine boons, either spontaneously given or extorted by wiles from an absent-minded deity.

*(To be continued)*

## OUR PRESENT DISCONTENT

*By Prof Ernest P. Horowitz*

WESTERN countries are throttled by constant wage cuts, unemployment and unbearable taxes; the crisis ever deepens, the very foundations of honesty and honour are undermined. An agonised world is threatened with an imminent economic crash or worse, a new world-war, ruthlessly engineered by lawless Japan, and backed by French money and munitions. The flames of war are licking toward the Soviet borders; Russian diplomacy, ever alert and ever peaceful, does its utmost to avert the powder barrel being touched off by a spark. Insatiate is the imperialist lust of land and greed of gold; the heavy toll is always paid by the toiling workers and tortured masses. Ah, for a Vedic breath of cosmic sympathy, for the living touch of a Rishi's hand, for the sound of an Acharya's voice! Only a powerful dynamo can relieve, with the strong current of universal harmony and love, the deadly disease and dreadful distortion of a society blighted by narrow

nationalism and selfish individualism. Is Spengler not right after all when he envisages the "Untergang des Abendlandes"? Is the sun not setting in the West? And is it too late for the "Sons of Light" to save us from moral catastrophe and spiritual wreckage?

Eloquent orators and erudite professors lecture, day by day, on occidental enlightenment, the glory of the Christian faith, and the benefits of Anglo-Saxon civilisation. Prosperity waits round the corner! we are told officially. But adversity, distress and ruin, commercial as well as cultural, stares all the same in our very faces. Even a Russo-Japanese War, so ardently desired by munition-makers and captains of industry, could in the long run not better the desperate situation.

The root of the evil lies deeper. Soul-force, character-daring and the spirit of truth, all three so conspicuous in the hero-age of George Washington, have broken down almost completely. A timid bourgeoisie-intelligentsia, devoid

of Shakti, Abhayam and Satyam, stops half-way and is stranded. The wealth-glutted underworld is more than a match to legalised gamblers and birds of prey who soar high enough, but all the time keep an eye on the carrion below. An inefficient police-force can no longer cope with the well-organised army of hold-up-men and kidnappers, and is afraid of the powerful gangsters who ever more plague our unhappy land. Here is romance indeed for Catherine Mayo! She would make a splendid fiction-writer (facts, alas, rather than fancies!) about the "American Wilderness" with its primitive instincts and jungle ethics, its obsolete traditions and absurd conventions, its countless laws and prohibitions, and its utter lawlessness. Unclean wealth and wanton sex dominate a rotting and tottering, conceited and hypocritical, ignorant and irrational bourgeoisie; these social vultures are ever on the look out for Kama-Kanchanam. But attachment belongs to the realm of Avidya, while compassion, devotion and renunciation are the glorious off-shoot of Brahmadhyaya. Brahma is manifest in creative sacrifice, social conscience and cosmic vision. But the mouth that dares utter

Brahma defiles the sacred sound. The Ineffable is beyond thoughts and words; the Impersonal transcends the Ishvara or Personal Lord and his rhythmic Shakti.

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Shankara in super-conscious moods (Nirvikalpa) felt one with Brahma, but could no longer speak about it. He was profoundly silent, a Muni, his magnificent logic being at perfect peace and rest. Reasoning only lasts until realisation. But Shankara, the man of realisation, was an Acharya; from supernormal state he descended to a lower plane and talked. Retaining his purified ego, the Mahacharya instructed men that the "personal god" whom they ignorantly worshipped is in reality the boundless One without a second! Brahma with a long final vowel is ultimately Brahma with a short final! Brahma is Sat-chit-anandam, pure flame and spirit, and not a petty personal god who blesses the national flag and destroys hostile armies. Christ too taught that God is love. The Son of God saw the whole universe as composed of Brahma and nothing else. The Saviour was a Seer and a Rishi; God's beloved was love itself and brotherhood incarnate.

## BUDDHISM AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS

*(Continued from previous issue)*

*By Swami Jagadiswarananda*

**I**T is impossible for Buddhism to ignore or discard the past link with Indian thought. The life of homelessness, the ideal of Buddha and the Buddhists, according to Jacobi, had a recognised position in Aryan society about the 3th century B. C. From the early Vedic times there had been in India men of ascetic temper who cut

themselves adrift from the responsibilities of life and wandered from home to homelessness. Yajnavalkya and other prominent Upanishadic thinkers in their love for the Supreme relinquished the desire for children, the struggle for wealth and the pursuit of worldly wealth, and went forth as mendicants. Such a man was the ideal man of India in

pre-Buddhist age, and the Brahmanical code recognised the super-social rights of these to sever themselves from the duties of life and the observance of rites. According to Havel, the eightfold path of good living along which Buddha led his followers was the ancient Aryan way. Even the metaphor of the eightfold path was borrowed from the fortified Aryan settlement which had generally eight gates. The rules of the Buddhist Sangha were borrowed from the Brahmanical texts. The symbolism of earliest Buddhist Stupas known to us is entirely borrowed from the sacrificial lore of the Vedas. The Stupa was the monument of the dead Aryan king, and the cult of Stupa worship, the chief ritual of early Buddhism, was no doubt connected with the Sraddha ceremony of the royalty.

Buddha did not interfere even with the domestic ritual which continued to be performed according to the Vedic rules. He did not find fault with Srigala who was performing mysterious ceremonies to guard his home and observing the funeral rites of his dead father. He taught him the significance of these that they are the reminders of his good deeds to people. Of course, Buddha was a reviler of the Vedas but he denounced that parts of the Vedas that countenanced the animal sacrifices. Buddhism has taken the principles of the Brahmanical theory of Karma, or transmigration as is suggested in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in the conversation between Arthavagha and Yajnavalkya. Buddha shattered the sway of a supreme Godhead but He was himself raised to the position of Isvara in Buddhism. Even Buddhism could not disturb the authority of the gods in practical religion. Buddhism in its Mahayana form went a step further and allowed to all Brahmanical deities a place in its pantheon.

As in Vedic religion Brahma's consort is Saraswati, so in Mahayana Adhi-Buddha has a female counterpart known as Prajnaparamita, and Avalokiteswara as Manjusri. The Hindu trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva were expressed by Buddhist formula of three gems—Dharma, Buddha, and Sangha.

Early Buddhism and Vedic religion were not separate. There was never a religion in India called Buddhism with temples and priests of its own order. The idea was all in Hinduism. Only the influence of Buddha was once paramount and made the nation monastic, said Swami Vivekananda about four decades ago. Supporting his view Dr. Mrs. Rhys Davids after her life-long research in Buddhist thought, in her "Sakya Origins," says that India has ever known him as Sakya Muni. His men, as their records admit, were spoken as Sakya Sons. It was only when Sakya was lingering in India as a moribund cult, as a decadent quasi-philosophy that Indian writers mentioned it as 'what the Baudhas say.' The learned authoress also asserts that the history of Pali Tripitaka evolution is not unique or something new but reflects the analogous history of the evolution of the Upanishads. The difference between Buddhism and Vedanta in the words of Swami Vivekananda is that which is between Judaism and Christianity.

There is no fundamental doctrinal opposition but a temperamental distinction between them. So Buddhism has been counted by Vijnana Bhikshu as the seventh Dharsana of Hindu philosophy. "But if the exponents of Buddhism," says Dr. A. Coomaraswamy in his Buddhism and the Gospel of Buddha, page (219) "insists on conferring the significance of Buddhism on what was taught, by Gautama,

we must point out at the same time that it stands for a restricted ideal which contrasts with Brahmanism as a part contrasts with the whole."

Buddhism borrowed constantly its doctrines from the Sankhya philosophy. Burnouf thinks that Buddhism is only a development of the Sankhya principles. Sankhya ideals prevailed at the time of Buddha, and the Buddhists admit that Kapila lived two centuries before Buddha. Mrs. Rhys Davids says in her "Buddhism," page 31, that she is convinced along with Garve and Jacobi that Buddha as a philosopher was entirely dependant on Kapila and Patanjali. Asvaghosha in the *Buddha-charita* says (quoted in the "Foundations of Buddhism" by Natitai Rokotoff) that the city of Kapilavastu, the birth place of Buddha, received its name in honour of the great Kapila, the founder of the Sankhya philosophy. All the essentials of Buddhist contemplatives such as Anapana Sati are taken directly from Patanjali. According to Weber it is not impossible that the Kapila of the Sankhya system and Gautama Buddha were one and the same person. Wilson writes that certain propositions about the eternity of matter, the principles of things and final extinction are common to Sankhya and to Buddhism. Sir Radhakrishnan says that the four noble truths of Buddhism correspond to the four truths of the Sankhyas as put in the Sankhya *Pravachana Bhasya*. The Buddhistic *Avidya*, *Samskara*, *Avigraha*, *Namarupa*, *Sadayatana*, *Pratityasamutpada* are parallel to or rather closely resemble *Pradhana*, *Buddhi*, *Abhankara*, *Tanmatras*, *Indriyas* and *Pratyaya-sangha* of the Sankhyas.

The Dhyana of Patanjali-yoga was taken up by the early Buddhists as Jhana, (Pali), from which the Chinese Chan and the Japanese Zen sects have

come into being (see "Buddhism and Christianity" by Carpenter, p. 288). The spiritual exercises and the Buddhist meditations are taken over almost unchanged from the Brahminical sources. Sir H. S. Gour says in his "Spirit of Buddhism," that both Sankhya and Buddhistic systems are like two streams that flowing into Vedantic channels have burst their banks and cut for themselves new channels, but after taking an independent course for some distance become reunited with the main stream from which they have become parted.

Some interpret Nirvana of Buddhism as simply extinction, a night of nothingness, a darkness where all light is extinguished, but according to Buddha, in "Samyutta" iii 109, to think that Nirvana is annihilation is a wicked heresy. He said, "To say of a brother that is set free by insight 'he knows not', 'he sees not' that is absurd. (The Nirvana of the Vimukta state is not void or a state of nothingness. It is like the Vedantic state of super-consciousness which is described in the Upanishads thus, "As the rivers run and in the deep lose their name and form, so released from name and form go the wise men to the Brahman." Nirvana is liberation from the fetters of body and mind. Buddha compares it in "Majjhima," 72, to the expiring flame which has no more any hay or wood to burn. So also the Svetasvatara and the Narsimhautratapaniya Upanishads speak of the Paramatman as the fire the fuel of which has been consumed. Final deliverance declared by Buddha is to be nothing other than a state of faultless flow of consciousness. Nirvana is an eternal condition of being beyond birth and death. Mr. Rokotoff says, "Nirvana is the gate which introduces us into the rhythm of the highest, fiery, creative, and

eternally expanding stream of infinite existence."

In the Mahapurinirvanasutra it is pointed out that even at the hour of death the thought of the Blessed One was directed towards the beautiful, remembering the beauty of the best places he traversed : Beautiful is Rajagriha, beautiful is Vaisali, beautiful are the groves and mountains. Max Muller and Childers after a systematic examination of all the passages relating to Nirvana conclude that there is not one passage which would require its meaning to be annihilation. Dahlke in his "Buddhist Essays," page 258, says, "The world rests upon me (Buddha) only in so far as it, as the known, stands opposed to me as the knower, only the form can be known but not that upon which it is based. Wherefore the world can be done away with through knowledge only in so far as it is formed. Only so far as it is form, does it rise and pass away; it is a Becoming, and Becoming can have an ending. That, however, upon which form is based is the eternity that is Being; and never and nowhere can Being pass into non-Being. Never and nowhere can what is eternal come to an end." According to Vedanta also Being devoid of all super-impositions is the Absolute whereas Becoming which is in the category of Time, Space and Causation is the relative and consequently transitory. Nirvana is timeless, spaceless and causeless existence.

Nirvana is the same as the Vedantic Samadhi and the mystic eternal rest. The Vedanta also defines the Brahman as Neti, Neti or not so, not so. Christian mystics and Muslim Sufis say that God is not improperly called nothing. The later Mahayana writers describe Nirvana as the completeness of Being, an eternal beatitude. According to them what is, is Bhavanga or the

stream of Being. The wind of ignorance blows over it and stirs its equable flow causing vibration in the ocean of existence. The sleeping soul is awakened and its calm unfettered course is arrested. It wakes up things and builds an individuality and isolates itself from the stream of Being. In deep sleep the barriers are broken. Nirvana is getting back into the stream of Being and resuming an uninterrupted flow. Even as no thought waves perturb the stream of Being when the man sleeps, so also in Nirvana we have eternal rest. In Vedanta also Samadhi or superconsciousness is compared to Sushupti or sound slumber, and Brahman is compared to a windless, calm, pacific and boundless ocean, and the rough waves created by the storm over it is the cosmic creation. As the Buddhist psalms describe Nirvana as a state of deep joy and immortal delight surpassing all description, so also the Vedantists describe Samadhi as a state of peace that passeth all understanding, the state of Absolute Bliss, inexpressible like the dumb man's tasting of nectar.

The Upanishads describe Brahman as Mounam or absolute silence like the Nirvanic calm of the Buddhists. Sankara also preserves an old story which tells that a man of the name of Bhava was questioned by his disciple on the nature of the Brahman but he kept silent. Being questioned a second and third time he replied at last, "I teach you, indeed, but you cannot understand. The Brahman is silence." Buddha took the agnostic attitude indicated in the Nazadiya Sukta or grand hymn of creation in the Rig Veda which runs thus:—"When there was no existence nor non-existence, no sky nor air, no death nor immortality, no day nor night." The Buddhistic Nirvana and Parinirvana are like Vedantic Jivanmukti and Videhamukti,

The only metaphysics that can justify Buddha's ethical doctrine is the metaphysics underlying the Upanishads. Buddhism is only a latter phase of the general movement of thought, of which the Upanishads were the earlier. Max Muller says that many of the doctrines of the Upanishads are no doubt pure Buddhism or rather Buddhism is on many points a consistent carrying out of the principles laid down in the Upanishads. Buddha being a Kshatriya was trained as a boy in all military exercises and knightly accomplishments, but it is not indicated in the early books that he was accomplished in Brahmanical lore. So we find in point of fact that the essential teaching of the Upanishads is not grasped by the early Buddhists. Moreover, the doctrines of the Upanishads were still esoteric truths known only to a few in pupillary succession. So Oldenberg says in his "Buddha" that there is no passage where the Buddhist text speaks of the Brahman of the Upanishads even for polemical purposes. The Brahman as the Universal One is not alluded to by the Buddhists either as an element of an alien or of their own creed, though there were very frequently mentions of God Brahma. So it has been remarked with perfect justice by A. Worsley in his "Concepts of

Monism," page 197, "It is possible that had Gautama chanced to meet in his earliest wanderings two teachers of the highest truths of the Vedas, the whole history of the old world might have been changed." Buddha met no foemen worthy of his steel, and was only acquainted with popular Brahmanism. For this reason, says Dr. A. Coomaraswamy, in his book page 200, "The greater part of Buddhist polemic is unavoidably occupied in beating the air and wasted in ignorant misunderstanding."

"Historical Buddhism" says Sir S. Radhakrishnan, "means the spread of Upanishadic doctrines among the peoples. It thus helped to create a heritage which is still living to the present day. Such democratic upheavals are common features of the Hindu history." The genius of Hinduism is expansion and assimilation, and these two forces of the Vedic Sakti are at work from time immemorial to the modern age. Buddha brought into prominence the neglected truths of the Upanishads. He was not an innovator but only a restorer of the ancient Aryan Way. Holmes in his "Creed of Buddha," says: it was Buddha's mission to accept the ideal of the Upanishads at its best and make it available for the daily needs of mankind.

*Concluded*

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# THE ESCAPE FROM CAPITALISM OR 'PLANNED ECONOMY'

*By Prof. K. S. Srikantan, M.A., F.R. Econ. S. (London)*

**T**HE escape from the tyrannies of capitalism has been the *Eldorado* of the economist ever since the very inception of the science; but Capitalism, like the classical Hydra, has survived every effort to dethrone it, with redoubled vigour and renewed energy. In fact, its persistence and strength have been so baffling that many have given up their attacks in despair, while still others, in their wisdom, have become converts to the Gospel of Capitalism. Naturally, capitalism, to-day, has become the unbridled autocrat of economic society and is well on the way to say, "When I open my lips, let no dogs bark."

At such a time when the whole world has very nearly resigned itself to the mercies of capitalism, the Soviet experiment to efface capitalism from its economic organisation evokes as much wonder as despair. While wondering at the magnitude of the plan, one cannot resist despairing of its future. In forecasting her future, Mr. Kyring declares that Soviet Russia would not only soon surpass the U. S. A. in industrial production, but lead the entire world in that direction. Soviet Russia is not interested in becoming the rival of any one of the industrial countries—she is interested mainly in establishing the superiority of communist principles over the capitalistic. In fact within so short a period Russia has made so much progress that many business men of Europe and America have already become nervous, and even anticipate

Russia dumping her goods in the world market.\*

How has Russia been trying to escape the tyrannies of capitalism is the most important question that arises from the last paragraph. She hopes to solve this problem by her well-known 'Five Year Plan' which is the topic of discussion in all academic circles. Her chief aim is to become very soon the leader of the industrial world without at the same time running the risk of unbridled capitalism. Her main purpose, therefore, has been to harness all her natural resources for the economic advancement of the country as a whole. She does not believe, in crawling, but only in jumping. That her plan is not over-ambitious is clear from the fact that she has long rivers to be harnessed for water power. Her coal reserves are estimated to be 400,000,000,000 metric tons. About 35 per cent. of the world's oil reserves are said to be in Russia. She ranks first in the production of platinum. She has excellent reserves of other minerals—manganese, gold, copper, silver, lead and asbestos. No less important for her economic future is her reserve of precious stones.

The Five Year Plan is, therefore, no foolish ideal. It is certainly the most extraordinary enterprise ever undertaken in the economic history of the world. The total capital to be spent

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\* The Economic Life of Soviet Russia—Hoover.

within the first five years is estimated at 646,00,000,000 rubles or about 10,000 crores of rupees. A number of new plants, some of them ranking among the largest in the world have been placed under construction. The Russian hydro-electric power plant is the second largest in the world. The *Nizhur Noogorod* automobile factory with a capacity of 140,000 automobiles and trucks a year has nearly reached completion. The Commissariat for Trade has decided that the newly formed company, Soyuz Moloko (United Dairy Industry) will invest in the new construction and re-equipment of existing dairy enterprises a total of 17,300,000 rubles this year. Another scheme contemplates the expenditure of 2,000,000 rubles for the construction of refrigerators, etc. Equally gigantic is their idea to bring up the airways to 41,928 Kilometres within the five years. In 1931 the experiment needed 3 million workers and now they need half a million more.

As every limb of this huge industrial organisation is owned and managed by the state, the tyrannies incidental to capitalism are expected to be avoided while scientific management will eliminate the wastes that arise from capitalism. Ever since the Bolshevik seized control of the Russian State, they have been successfully pushing through most Revolutionary changes in order to socialise the country. Their chief object in so doing is to make the country a fit place for the helpless masses to live in. They doubt the survival of capitalism any longer. They are convinced, says Hoover, that capitalistic countries would sooner or later meet with common disaster, because of the revolt of Labour and the conflicting economic interests of nations. Ideas like these have prompted their programme of eco-

nomic reconstruction which can be called, for the sake of convenience, '*planned economy*'.

The entire economic organisation is under the control of a state planning commission which is known as the *Gosplan*. This is a commission of the Council of Labour and Defence, otherwise known as the "Sto". The *Gosplan* has two principal functions. They are the function of planning and the examination of the results of planning. Its general character is more advisory than administrative. It has three Sectors, known as the Economic Sector, the Producing Sector, and the Reconstructing Sector. It is very difficult to understand the dividing line between these, for often the functions of one merge into that of the other imperceptibly. In addition to these Sectors there is an Institute of Economic Research. Every branch of the national economy is represented on Gosplan and has a planning section which is very closely connected with '*Gosplan*.' Even sections in a factory are supposed to have a *production plan* and a committee which is responsible for the successful execution of the plan; the various sections send, in the first instance, their data to the Gosplan. Upon the basis of all the information received from all sources it draws up a comprehensive plan for industry. It should however be noted that the Gosplan has the duty of working out a plan for industry which will embody the decisions of the Soviet Government which in essence are the decisions of the central committee of the party. The higher planning organs do not attempt to plan the actual distribution, purchase and sales of commodities. This function is carried out by the Combination. Gosplan plans the number of tons of steel which should be produced in a given year and also the number of tractors, but the

actual process of the delivery of the steel with specification as to quality and kind, etc., would be arranged by the Combination for the black metals and the agricultural machinery combination. The yearly and quarterly plan which is worked out by the Gosplan and given to the supreme Economic Council for the Combination and in turn by the Combination to the Trust and so on to the departments within a factory is called the Promjin plan. There are three intermediate planning and directing bodies—the supreme Economic Council, the Combination and the Trust.

The party that is responsible for these wonderful changes have always felt the industrial backwardness of the country very keenly. But they knew that Socialism could not be established until the country had become thoroughly industrialised. That the standard of life of the labourer in Russia should not compare favourably with those in the neighbouring countries, in a place where capitalism had been given a go-by, was a feature which they could not tolerate even for a moment. It is on account of this sympathetic attitude that the 'Five Year Plan' has taken an almost mystic significance, and the party is determined that the plan should be accomplished at any cost. The per capita consumption of food products by the city labourer has been changed as follows—while the consumption of bread is to remain the same the consumption of meat is to increase by 27·7 per cent., eggs 72 per cent., and milk products 55·6 per cent. For the rural population the amount of bread consumed is to increase by 5·7 per cent., meat 16·7 per cent., eggs 45·2 per cent., and milk products 24·7 per cent. The index of working hours, in percentages of pre-war working hours, is to fall from 77% in 1927-28 to 70·5% in 1932-33. The index

of real wages is to rise from 122·5% of pre-war wages in 1927-28 to 208·9% in 1932-33. That vigorous efforts are being made to improve the conditions of the labourers is well known to all. (Hoover).

In spite of the heavy literature on the subject, "Whither Russia" still remains an unsolved riddle. The opinions of experts have been so varied that those who are in raptures over her schemes are no less than those who doubt her experiments. No less a person than Rabindranath Tagore was in Russia some time back. He certainly seems to have been well impressed with the position of the peasants. In fact the conversation of the Poet with the peasants reproduced in one of the recent issues of the Modern Review reveals a tale quite different from what is ordinarily told in the press about Russia. The American engineers and capitalists who go to Russia have also been impressed by the gigantic strides made by Russia. She has certainly thrown an effective challenge to the capitalistic world.

But the question, has Russia escaped from the tyrannies of capitalism, still remains a hard one. One can congratulate Russia on her efforts, but not on her achievements. Excepting in certain corners the labourers have still much to desire. In the words of Hoover, "The standard of living of the labourer is in some respects worse than during Tsarist times, in terms of goods, clothing and shelter." Here again we should note that she is now in a transition and to criticise her existing conditions would certainly be unjust. But Russia is not going to reach the old standard of life which has reached a "comparative level": of luxury. Even if the productive mechanism of the Soviet system were to become efficient enough to make this possible for the wide


masses of the population such a standard of life would be repugnant to the spirit of communism. Under the regime of Russian communism, there will never be any artificial stimulation of desire through advertisement, nor will the desire to emulate the "leisure class" operate to create a standard of living which would include non-essentials. Simple living, communal housing, proletarian club houses, plain clothing, motor transport, short hours of labour, vacation at state recreation houses, make up the Russian ideal of labourer's standard life. In spite of all these, it cannot be said that Russia has succeeded in overcoming the tragedies of a capitalistic society. The attitude of those in power towards their subordinates has not in any way improved. The "white collar" workers such as stenographers, clerks, and book-

keepers having no influence suffer seriously. They are discriminated against in many ways. They are perhaps the 'New Proletariat' of the proletarian state.\* It would certainly be a matter for regret, if in their anxiety to escape the capitalistic tyrannies, they give room for others. In fact that is what appears to be now happening to Russia, although it is too early to say anything. It is hoped that the authors of the *Five Year Plan* would realise that old tyrannies are often better than new-fangled ones. While it is true that her success would mean death to 'capitalism', it should also be borne in mind that her failure would give to capitalism a strength unheard of before. Nay, it would seal once for all the aspirations of the socialist.

\* Hoover—Economic Life of Soviet Russia.

## BRAHMA MIMAMSA: ADWAITA, VISHISHTA-DWAITA AND DWAITA

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

 FIERCE warfare of philosophic polemics has been waged for centuries among these schools—Adwaita Vishishtadwaita and Dwaita. Sri Ramanuja in his Sri Bhashya and Desika in his works have bitterly attacked Sri Sankara. Sri Madhya also attacked him. In fact a discreditable attempt was made by the Dwaiting in Manimanjari to say that Sri Sankara was an incarnation of the Asura *Maniman*. The Dwaitic work *Nyayamritam* criticised the Adwaitic work *Chitsukhiyam*. Madhusoodana criticised *Nyayamritam* in his *Adwaita Siddhi*. His work was criticised by Ramatirtha in his *Tarangini*. Brahmananda's work *Brahmanandiyam* is a

reply defending Adwaita Siddhi against *Tarangini*. Even to-day new works like those of Krishna Sastri and Kapistalam Desikacharya have been and are being written.

So far as the sources—the Upanishads and the Gita—are concerned, there are clear passages confirming these clear cut views.

Are we then to regard the Upanishads as speaking with a double or a triple or a manifold voice? Dr. Radhakrishnan would tell us: "The Upanishads speak with the double voice of philosophy and religion." If philosophy and religion cannot speak with a single voice, the less we have of them the better, for

us? But do they speak with a divided voice?

Sri Sankara unified the utterances by his doctrines of Brahman and Atman and Maya and Vivarta Vada. His doctrine of noumenal reality and phenomenal reality gives us the means of unifying the *abheda sruthis*, the *bheda sruthis* and the *ghataka sruthis* (scriptural passages declaring unity, those declaring differentiation, and those harmonising them). Sri Sankara does not regard or reject the world as an illusion or mere non-existence (*sunya* or *thuchcha*). Sri Ramanuja finds the unity in his doctrine of God ensouling matter and spirit which are His modes or *Pra-karas*. Sri Madhva finds the unity in his theory of God ruling the entire cosmos of spirit and matter by His unifying will, though matter and spirit are entirely distinct from Him. Thus each has given a grand unification. It is not possible to commingle and unify the three unifications as regards the ultimate categories. Sri Sankara affirms that there is only one noumenal reality, that Brahman is Nirguna, that the variety of soul and matter belongs to the plane of phenomenal reality, and that Brahman and Atman are one (not that the soul is merged in Brahman at liberation); Sri Ramanuja affirms that Brahman is Saguna, that He ensouls Chit and Achet which are His modes, that the soul is Anu (atomic), and that liberation is in the realisation of God as *seshi* and *prakari*. Sri Madhva affirms that Brahman is Saguna, that His glory is unapproachable by souls, that He creates and rules the cosmos by His will, and that everything is dependent on Him. The soul cannot be at the same time atomic and infinite, and one with God and separate from God. Hence as regards the ultimate truths the three systems will each go its separate way. The Vishishtadwaita and Dwaita systems

cannot absolutely shed anthropomorphism, however much we may refine them. The ordinary mind will stand aghast at the noumenal identity affirmed by the Adwaita—an identity which banishes, nay denies, the reality of all variety. As the Panchadasi says: Just as in the case of a man plunged into the sea his senses are in a state of tremor, so the mind, on learning that God is one infinite noumenal bliss, is in a state of tremor.

The only proof is in experience and realisation. Mere logic is swallowed up in direct and intimate and immediate realisation.

The three systems emphasise in short identity, immanence, and inferiority. The supernatural order of reality affirmed by the other schools is no more a sense datum than the Paramarthika or Absolute Reality of unity affirmed by Adwaita. The vanishing of all variety in a unitary bliss is affirmed by the Veda and confirmed by experience. Probably the only way in which they can be harmonised is that shown in the following verse of Sri Sankara, for otherwise the sin of the fights about the supremacy of Siva or Vishnu, and the relation of the soul to the oversoul, and the reality of the world will commence again and again and for ever and ever:

देहबुद्ध्या तुदासोऽहं जीवबुद्ध्यात्वदंशकः ।

आत्मबुद्ध्या त्वमेवाहं इतिवेदान्तर्दिष्टमः ॥

(From the point of view of the body I am Thy slave, from the point of view of Jiva, I am a part of Thee, from the point of view of Atman (Supreme Reality), I am Thou. Such is the declaration of Vedanta.)

Sri Sankara's Adwaita is the first carefully and elaborately formulated and constructed system of thought from which the Vishishtadwaita, Dwaita-

Sudhadwaita, Sivadwaita, Saktadwaita, etc., are realistic defections of different degrees. Dr. Deussen says in his *Elements of Metaphysics*: "The Vedanta is, now as in the ancient time, living in the mind and heart of every thoughtful Hindoo. It is true that even here, in the sanctuary of Vedantic metaphysics, the realistic tendencies, natural to man, have penetrated, producing the misinterpreting variations of Sankara's Adwaita known under the names Vishishtadwaita, Dwaita, Suddhadwaita, of Ramanuja, Madhwa, Vallabha, but India till now has not yet been seduced by their voices." I do not presume to discuss and decide here the respective claims of Adwaita and Vishishtadwaita and Dwaita on our minds. But we must remember that modern science has almost argued away the seeming solidity of things, and that the highest western philosophic thought has been

in the direction of the Absolute beyond all the variety of phenomenal existence. It is only through the Adwaita system that Indian thought takes rank with the highest universal thought affirming the unity of the ultimate Reality. The Adwaita does not deny the relative reality of God and soul and the universe, and allows the fullest scope for morality and devotion. Dr. Deussen says: "And so the Vedanta in its unfalsified form is the strongest support of pure morality, is the greatest consolation in the sufferings of life and death,—Indians keep to it." The Adwaita appeals finally to *Veda* and to *Anubhava* (seper-experience), and each man must seek and attain the highest Reality by the highest *Sadhana* (means). *Anubhava* cannot be unsubstantialised away as an abstraction, for it has been described in rapturous terms as infinite and eternal bliss. (आनन्दरूपमृतं यद्विभक्ति)

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

VAITATHYA PRAKARANA

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

**T**HAT the objects of the waking state are found to be of use, has to be construed differently in dream. Hence as they both have a beginning and end, they are both unreal. (7).

### *Sankara's Commentary*

An objection is brought forward. It is not proper to say that the objects appearing in the waking state are unreal, like those appearing in dream. Because, objects of the waking state like food, drink, chariot, &c., are capable

of being used to assuage hunger and thirst and for going from place to place, and their usefulness is recognised by us all, but similar objects seen in a dream are not useful like these. Therefore, it is mere supposition that objects of waking state are unreal like those of a dream. (The reply to the above is as follows): It is not right to say so, as the usefulness of food, drink, &c., that we experience in the waking state, cannot be applied in the case of objects in the dreaming state. When one, who in the waking state has assuaged his hunger and thirst by food and water, goes to sleep, he may feel in his dream

that he is hungry and thirsty, and may consider himself as suffering for days and nights, through fasting and not quenching his thirst. One, who in dream feels satisfied with taking food and drinking water, on awaking feels that dream experiences are all false. The condition of one who is awake (and has his appetite satisfied and then falling asleep dreams that he is fasting and thirsty) is similar to the above. Hence in the case of objects (found useful) in the waking state, the question has to be construed differently in dream. Hence, there can be no objection in considering the objects in the waking state to be as unreal as those seen in dream. Therefore, on account of the similarity in these two conditions of objects having a beginning and an end, they are considered to be unreal.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

The fact that quite new objects (such as are never seen in the waking state) are seen in dream is due to the peculiar nature of the cogniser in that state, just as in the case of those residing in Swarga (heaven). Just as a well-instructed person in the waking state (goes to a new place and sees new objects peculiar to that place), so it is in the case of the person who goes to sleep and dreams (8).

*Sankara's Commentary*

(The opponent's position): Because the objects appearing in the waking and dreaming conditions (states) are all of one kind, it is not right to infer that those objects are unreal. This is because the illustration is not duly established. If you ask how, we say that there is no such rule that only those things seen in the waking state should be seen in the dream. We see quite new objects in dream. One may dream that one has eight arms and is riding

on an elephant with four tusks. Similarly various new scenes appear in the dream. Not being like the rest of the objects, these are not unreal, but real. Therefore the illustration is not well established, and it is not right to say that like dream, the waking is unreal. (The reply to the above objection is as follows): The objection is not proper. The objects said to be new in dream have no independent existence of their own but they are peculiar to the nature of the cogniser who is in that dreaming state. Just as dwellers in Swarga (heaven) such as Indra have 1000 eyes (that is to say, their having 1000 eyes is peculiar to the region in which they dwell and does not exist outside that region), so the new objects seen by the dreamer do not exist independently (of the dreamer) but are dependent on the peculiar state of consciousness of the dreamer. The dreamer sees his new mental creations by passing into the state of dream. Just as in this phenomenal world one who is well instructed in the way to a new and distant place goes there and sees new objects in that place, so also in this case (of the dreamer). Just as the rope-snake and mirage which are characteristic of the waking state are unreal, so the new objects seen in a dream, which are peculiar to that condition only and are dependent on the nature of the dreamer, are also unreal. Therefore it is not right to say that the illustration of the dream is not apt.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

In the state of dream internal mental modifications are unreal. Those perceived by mind as outside of itself are (relatively) real but both are unreal. (9)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Having overcome the objection that there is want of similarity (between

objects of the waking state) and new objects seen in dream, the fact of the objects of waking state being like those seen in dream is described in more detail. Even in dream the internal mental modifications are felt to be unreal, as they disappear the moment after they are formed. In the same dream, objects such as a jar, cognised by the eye and other sensory organs as being outside the mind, are felt to be (relatively) real. So even in the case of things determined to be unreal, there is a twofold division of (relative) reality and unreality. We have seen that the external and internal modifications of the mind are both unreal.

#### *Gaudapadas' Karika*

In the waking state, the internal, mental creations are unreal. Those perceived by the mind as external to itself are (relatively) real. It is right to call them both unreal. (10).

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

It is proper to call the (relatively) real and the unreal both unreal, as the external and internal things are both creations of the mind. The rest is as explained in the previous verse.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

If the objects in both states are unreal, who can be said to cognise these objects? and who creates them? (11).

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

If the objects perceived both in dream and waking are mere unreal appearances, who cognises the internal and external creations of the mind? Tell us who forms the basis for memory (and knowledge)? If you say none, you will be denying the Atman. So asks an opponent jestingly.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Atman, the shining one, by his own Maya creates the various

objects out of Himself. He cognises these objects. This is the dictum of the Vedanta. (12).

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

The Atman, the shining one, by His own Maya, creates the various forms of objects, to be later on described, out of Himself, just as out of rope and like objects, snake and other objects are created. Similarly, He cognises these different objects Himself. Such is the final opinion of Vedanta. No one different from Atman is the basis of memory and knowledge. Like Vainasikas (Bouddhas) we do not say that there is no basis for knowledge and memory. This is what is meant.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

(Atman) differentiates the Vyavaharic substances found (latent) in the mind. Conceiving the objects as external to Himself, (Atman) manipulates the substances which are in an undifferentiated state. In this way, the Lord (Atman) creates (everything). (13).

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

To the question as to how (Atman) creates substances after forming Sankalpa (after determining in His own mind what to create), we reply as follows: Vyavaharic things like sound, &c. and other things (like Swarga, sacrifices &c.) are in the mind in a latent form and in an undifferentiated state. These he differentiates (that is, separates them one from another). He creates the objects as external to Himself, objects such as the known earth (five elements), &c., and objects which exist only momentarily when thought of (in the mind). Internally in His mind, He creates desires. The Lord, Iswara, that is, Atman, acts (in the above mentioned way).

*Gaudapada's Karika*

Those things which exist only as long as they are thought of as well as those external things which are related to two points of time are all creations (of the mind). There is no other reason for this difference. (14).

*Sankara's Commentary*

(An opponent may say): To say that like dream, everything is the creation of the mind, is open to the following objection: For, mental creations and desires are limited by the mind. There is difference between them and the external objects, which are limited by (or related to) two points in time. (To this is replied): The objection is not sound. Those internal things which remain only as long as they are thought of, and those which have no other period of time limiting them apart from the time they are thought of, are those meant by "chitta kalab." That is, their existence is momentary (and depends on the time that the mind thinks of them). Those objects which are related to two periods of time are limited by each other. For instance, in the saying, "He remains as long as the cow is being milked" is implied that as long as he stays, the cow is being milked, and that as long as the cow is being milked, he stays. Also, the saying, "This is as much as that and that is as much as this," illustrates the point. This mutual limitation and dependence are found in external objects. So they are said to have two periods of time. The internal things limited by the time they are thought of and the external things bound by two periods of time are both mental creations. The fact that external objects are limited by two periods of time is not due to any other reason than that they are mental creations.

Even in this matter (of limitation by two periods of time), the illustration of the similarity to dream holds good. (The dream objects which appear to be external have also the peculiarity of being limited by two periods of time and this is not to be taken as a point of difference).

*Gaudapada's Karika*

Those that are internal in an unmanifested state and those that appear to be external in a manifested state, all these are mere creations only. Their (apparent) difference consists in the instruments of cognition. (15)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Though internal mental impressions (or Vasanas) remain within unmanifested, and though external objects are manifested and visible to the sensory organs such as the eye, their difference depends on the instruments of cognition (the mind in the one case and the sensory organs in the other), and not on anything real in their nature; for they appear to be similar (so far as their reality is concerned) in dream as well. Thus the difference is due to the difference in the instruments of cognition. That the objects of the waking state, like the things of the dream, are mere creations, is thus well established.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

The first product of thought (of Atman) is Jiva (the individual soul). Then are formed the internal and external objects. As is knowledge, so is memory (formed). (16)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Here is described the root of the origin (or production) of internal and external objects with their mutual relation of cause and effect. This is Jiva

whose very nature consists of the relation of cause and effect, as shown by the statements 'I do this', 'I am subject to happiness and misery', etc. Though the Atman is pure and free from all such relations, He super-imposes on Himself the idea of Jiva, like the super-imposition of the snake on the rope. Afterwards, for the sake of Jiva, He differentiates between action, instruments of action and results of action, and creates external and internal objects such as Prana (life force) and the like. The reason for this production (or super-imposition) is now explained. The Jiva who is himself a product (or super-imposition) becomes the basis for all the subsequent super-impositions. His knowledge is derived from his varied experience and his memory corresponds with his knowledge. From this he comes to have a knowledge that a particular thing is the cause giving rise to a particular effect (result). Thus he gets to have a memory of cause and effect. He experiences their knowledge and the action, the means of action and the result of action necessary for knowledge. He gets a memory of these experiences. From this memory now experiences arise. Thus he creates numerous kinds of external and internal objects, binding them together with the relation that some are causes and others are effects.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Just as in imperfect light, on an insufficiently determined object

such as a rope, are super-imposed a snake or a line of water and similar objects, so (the phenomenal universe) is super-imposed on Atman. (17)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

How the super-imposition of Jiva on Atman is the root of all other super-impositions is now explained by means of illustrations. In this world, (people) without determining the real nature of the rope, and mistaking that it is really what it appears to be, super-impose on it, in imperfect light, a snake or line of water or a rod. The cause of this super-imposition is the (initial) error of not determining the nature of the rope. If the real nature of the rope had been previously established, there would have been no super-imposition of anything of the nature of a snake, etc. For instance, nobody would super-impose anything else on one's own fingers (as one has a full knowledge of the fingers). As in the illustration (of the rope-snake), a man does not determine beforehand that his Atman is of the nature of pure non-dual Consciousness, in contra-distinction to the medley of worldly experience bound by the relation of cause and effect, and in consequence super-imposes on Atman a Jiva, life-force (Prana) and a variety of other objects. The settled opinion of all Upanishads is that only Atman is true or real and that everything else is super-imposed on it.

## NEWS & REPORTS

### **Sri Ramakrishna Mission Relief Work.**

We have already informed that the Tornado Relief Work conducted by us in the district of Mymensingh would have to be continued up to the middle of July. But for want of funds we have

had to close it a week earlier. We shall soon publish a report of the relief work for public information.

The public is aware that we conducted famine relief work in 58 villages of Rangpur District with Fulchhari as the centre from 21st May, 1931 to 12th

July and also in 42 villages of Nuddea District with Chamua and Haludbaria as centres from 20th July to 20th August. Later on during the flood in North and East Bengal in 1931 we carried on flood relief operation from 2nd August to 26th December in 160 villages in Pabna District with Salap, Sthal, Mulkandi, Gopalpur and Jamirta as centres, and in 62 villages in Mymensingh with Gayahatta as the centre. During that flood 6 relief centres were opened in Dacca District from Dacca branch centre of our Mission. A separate report of the work has been published from there. From 20th January to 28th April in 1932 we again conducted famine relief operation in 26 villages in Pabna District from Gopalpur centre and 48 villages in Mymensingh from Tangail centre.

In connection with the famine relief work in Rangpur and Nuddea Districts during 1931 we distributed 964 mds., 25 seers and 14 chhataks of rice, 230 mds. of paddy and 1913 pieces of new cloth among 5792 helpless persons from 100 villages. During the flood relief work in Mymensingh and Pabna 4518 mds., 10 seers and 5 chhataks of rice, 26 mds., of paddy, 3152 pieces of new cloth and 3140 pieces of old cloth and shirts, etc., were distributed from 6 centres among 8100 recipients of 222 villages. Besides this during the earlier stage of the flood a few mds. of Chira were distributed from Salap centre and 2 instruments for thrashing paddy were given to 2 needy widows from Gayahatta centre. After the flood when the water became polluted and diseases like Diarrhoea and Dysentery and Cholera began to appear, we made arrangements for the distribution of medicine and in some special cases for the distribution of diet also from those centres. During the famine relief work of 1932, 2046 helpless persons from 74 villages in Mymensingh and Pabna received 997 mds., 39 seers and 12 chhataks of rice, 600 pieces of new cloth and 90 pieces of new guernseys from 2 centres in Mymensingh and Pabna Districts. For these works we received Rs. 20,992-1-3 as donations and Rs. 248-10-9, as sale proceeds of commodities. We received in all Rs. 21,240-12-0 and the expenses amount-

ed to Rs. 26,348-11-9. We met the additional expenditure of Rs. 5,107-15-9 from the Provident Fund of the Mission. This has almost exhausted the Provident Fund. But it is on this Provident Fund that we have to depend for starting any new relief work. So naturally the depletion of this fund has made new relief operations impossible though there are urgent calls from different places. This is why we feel the urgency of strengthening this fund immediately. We appeal to all who feel for distressed humanity to send their contributions to the Ramakrishna Mission Provident Fund; any contribution, however small, sent for this purpose to the President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Howrah, will be thankfully received and duly acknowledged.

(Sd.) SUDDHANANDA,

Secretary,

15-7-'32. Ramakrishna Mission.

### R. K. Math, Conjeevaram

The opening ceremony of Sri Ramakrishna Math, Big Conjeevaram, was performed on 17th July, 1932. There was a good gathering of devotees of the R. K. Mission from the town and Madras as well as several Sannyasins and Brahmacharins from Madras Math and adjacent centres. While the consecration ceremonies and regular Puja were being conducted in the shrine, devotional songs were continuously sung and Saptasati, the Gita and Upanishads chanted. With a special Homa and Arati the forenoon function came to an end. In the afternoon Vidwan Musiri Subrahmanya Iyer sang many devotional songs which appealed to the hearts of all present. At 5 p.m. there was a well-attended public meeting presided over by Swami Yatiswarananda, the head of the Madras Math. The Swami explained how the Math premises, the adjacent library and some funds had been donated some time ago by Mr. C. D. Saravana Perumal, Retired Asst. Engineer of Burma P.W.D., and how it was Mr. Perumal's sustained devotion that had overcome numerous impediments which were threatening to postpone the opening ceremony to a much later period. He

next referred to the spiritual past of the holy city of Conjeevaram, and expressed his conviction that the universal teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and the ideals of the R. K. Mission would in time take deep root there. Swami Vipulananda, Swami Avinagananda, Pandit Natesa Sastrigal, Rao Bahadur C. Ramanujachari, were the other speakers of the evening. Mr. C. D. S. Perumal, the donor, thanked the Swamis and guests and hoped that the public would take a lively interest in the Math and avail themselves fully of the presence of the Sannyasins in their midst. After Aratrikam and the singing of Rama Nama Sankirtan, the function came to a close.

Under the auspices of the new Math Swami Yatiswarananda, President of the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, gave two discourses in English on "Hinduism—The Eternal Religion" and "The Ideals of the Ramakrishna Mission" in the Math Hall on the evenings of 5th and 7th August respectively. The Swami also met a number of gentlemen of the town in an informal meeting on the 7th August morning and spoke to them on "The Practice of Religion."

Swami Rudrananda of the Ramakrishna Math, Madras delivered a lecture in Tamil on "The Life and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna" on Sunday the 14th August.

A weekly religious class has been organised, and it is being conducted on Sunday mornings by Swami Ajarananda who is placed in charge of the Math at Conjeevaram.

### A Study Centre at Mysore

It was the great desire of Swami Vivekananda to present Vedanta to the modern world from the standpoint of scientific thought. With this end in view the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama in Mysore has started a Study Class. The object is to acquaint the Sannyasins of the Ramakrishna Mission with the scientific and philosophic knowledge of the West. Some of the professors of the Mysore University and Pandits of the Maharaja's Sanskrit College have kindly agreed to help the Sadhus in their studies and take classes in the Ashrama. The course of study includes Comparative Religion, Psychology and

Philosophy of Religion, Logic, Scientific Method, Western Philosophy and Vedanta in all its phases. The classes began on the 16th of May with blessings from His Holiness Swami Shivananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission. The course is expected to last for about two years. The Ashrama cannot sufficiently thank His Highness, the Maharaja of Mysore, for the uniform sympathy evinced by him in matters relating to the activities of the Ashrama from its very inception. It is a source of the highest gratification to the Swamis that such institutions have grown under the spiritual auspices of an Indian ruler, so exceptionally good and godly.

### The Ramkrishna Mission Sevashram, Tamluk, Midnapur

The Eighteenth, Annual Report for the year 1931 shows the activities of the Sevashram as given below. The Sevashram maintains a charitable hospital and a charitable dispensary which admitted and treated 72 in-door patients and 5748 out-door cases in 1931. During the year under review the Sevashram nursed 19 patients in their own homes, distributed cloth and rice to 29 persons, small cash to 17 persons and stipends to 38 persons. Two cremations were performed. Cholera relief work was undertaken in the affected villages of the Tamluk Sub-division in 1931 when 6 houses were disinfected and 14 patients treated. The Sevashram raised some money for the flood relief work in East and North Bengal undertaken by their headquarters. It has a circulating library from which books are weekly distributed to and collected from the public. The Sevashram do also the work of preaching the ideals and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda throughout the sub-division and organise lantern lectures. Anniversary celebrations on the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda and Durga Puja are performed with usual rites, and on these occasions people from almost all quarters congregate.

The Ashram among other things conducts regular worship as well as religious classes and Bhajanas.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XIX]

OCTOBER, 1932

[No. 6

## HINDU ETHICS



देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवम् ।

ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते ॥

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।

स्वाध्यायाभ्यासनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥

मनः प्रसादः सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः ।

भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत् तपो मानस उच्यते ॥

Worship of the gods, of the twice-born, of the teachers and of the wise; purity, straightforwardness, continence, and non-injuriousness,—these are called austerity of the body.

Speech which causes no vexation, and is true, as also agreeable and beneficial, and regular study of the scriptures,—these are said to form austerity of speech.

Serenity of mind, kindness, silence, self-control, honesty of motive,—this is called the mental austerity.

BHAGAVAD GITA, CHAP. XVII, 14-16.

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

*(Continued from Page 165)*

## THE MASTER IN BHAVA MUKHA

*Why women could in all respects  
mix freely with the Master*

**M**OREOVER, in the company of the Master the consciousness of the Self would become so prominent in their mind that at his order they could easily perform all those actions which are considered too adventurous by women in general and which they can never do even if ordered by any other person. At the bidding of the Master ladies of respectable families, who would never travel anywhere without carriages or palanquins, would sometimes unhesitatingly accompany him in the day-time walking on foot along the public road to the Ganges side and come to the Kali Temple at Dakshineswar by boat. Not only that, arriving there, at the order of the Master, they might again go for buying provisions from the market near by and return on foot in the evening to their houses at Calcutta. One or two examples in illustration of the above statement will make the point clearer.

### *The First Illustration*

It was the month of Bhadra or Aswin in the year 1884. The Holy Mother went to her paternal house at Jairambati. Sreejut Balaram

Bose went to Brindavan along with his father. Sjt. Rakhal (Swami Brahmananda), Sjt. Gopal (Swami Adwaitananda) and many other ladies and gentlemen accompanied them. At that time a certain aristocratic lady of Baghbazar, who had only heard of the Master before, was feeling an intense desire to meet him. She communicated her feeling to another lady of her acquaintance who had been going to the Master for the past two years. After joint consultation they decided to visit the Master. Accordingly the following afternoon they came to Dakshineswar by boat. Arriving there they found that the door of the Master's room was closed. They peeped through the two holes in the northern wall of the room and saw that he was taking rest. So they waited at the Nahavat house where the Holy Mother used to reside. After a short while the Master got up, opened the northern door, and finding them seated in the upper storey of the Nahavat house called out "Well, come down here". As soon as they came to him and took their seats, the Master got down from the cot and sat by the side of the lady devotee who was known to him before. When she made an

attempt to move aside out of shyness, he told her, "What is this shyness for? Nothing is attainable as long as delicacy, hatred and fear remain. (With a movement of his hand) I am the same as you are. But (pointing to his beard) you feel delicacy for this. Is it not?"

With these words he entered into a discourse on God and began to give instructions of various kinds. The lady devotees too forgot the distinction of sex and freely began to question and listen. After a long continued discussion the Master said at the time of parting, "Come once a week. In the beginning one should pay frequent visits here." Knowing them to be poor although belonging to respectable families and considering their incapacity to pay the boat fare or the carriage charges always, the Master added, "Form a party of three or four and come together in a boat. While going back walk on foot from this place to Baranagore, and from there go together in a carriage." Needless to say, the lady devotees thenceforward were acting accordingly.

### *The Second Illustration*

One day another lady told us : "Nice cream had been prepared in the confectionery of Bhola. We knew that the Master was fond of taking cream. So we purchased a big pot of cream, and five of us together went in a boat to Dakshineswar. Reaching there, to our great surprise, we came to know that he had gone to Calcutta. All of us were

utterly disappointed. What to do? Ramlal Dada was there. On our enquiry about the place where the Master had gone, he said, "To the house of Master Mahasaya at Kambuliatala." On hearing this the mother of A—said, "I know the place. It is near my paternal house. Do you like to go? Let us go. What to do here merely sitting down?" All approved of it. We therefore gave the cream to Ramlal Dada and told him, "Give this to the Master when he comes back." As we had already sent away the boat, we began to walk on foot. But such was the will of the Master that as soon as we reached Alam-bazar, we came across a carriage which was returning to Calcutta. We hired it and came to Shyam-pukur. Arriving there we met with another difficulty. The mother of A—could not recognise the house. Going round hither and thither she stopped the carriage at last before her father's house and called one of the servants. The servant came with us and pointed out the house. How to find fault with the mother of A—? She was younger than we were by three or four years, being but twenty-six or twenty-seven years old then. A young woman that she was, she had never come out on the public road. Besides, the house\* was situated in a lane. How was it possible for her to recognise?

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\* Sreejut Mahendra Nath Gupta, who was a great devotee of the Master and who won the gratitude of all by the publication of the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, used to live then in a rented house at Kambuliatala, Calcutta.

"Anyhow we arrived there. We were not even acquainted with the members of Master Mahasaya's family. We entered into the house and saw the Master sitting on a cot in a small room. Nobody was near by. As soon as he saw us he said with a laughter, "How have you all come here?" We prostrated before him and spoke out everything. He was exceedingly glad, and asked us to sit inside the room and went on talking with us on various topics. Nowadays many people say that he never allowed any woman to touch him or go near him. When we hear this, we laugh and think, 'We are not yet dead!' Who knows what compassion he had! Men and women were alike in his eyes. But he could not tolerate the company of women for a long time. In cases of prolonged interviews with them he would say, 'Well, now go and visit the temple.' We heard him telling the same to the members of the male sex too.

"However, we squatted down there and were talking with him.

The older two amongst us sat in front of the door, and the other three in a corner inside the room. At that time he whom the Master used to call 'the fat Brahmin' (Sreejut Prankrishna Mukhopadhyaya), came in. There was no way for us to go out. Where to go? The old women removed their seats to a window in front. And we three went below the cot on which the Master sat and lay down with the face downwards. The whole body got swollen up with mosquito-bites. But what to do? No possibility of moving even! We lay down calm and quiet. The talk over, the Brahmin gentleman went away, after one hour or so. Then we came out and laughed at the whole incident.

"The Master was led into the inner apartment for light refreshment. With him we too went in. Some time after refreshment he got into the carriage (to go back to Dakshineswar). Then all of us returned to our respective houses on foot. It was 9 P.M."

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## INDIA'S MAGNA MATER

**M**AN as distinguished from the brutes is essentially a believing creature. The lure of the Beyond is ever acting on his mind, and both in his savage as well as civilised states he finds peace and solace only when he opens his heart in prayer and adoration. In fact except when surfeited with conceit derived from a false notion of science or psychology, man holds fast to the Ultimate Determiner of Destiny, and in humility and reverence contemplates the mystery of His Being and yearns for the glory of His presence. But endowed as he is with a body and the mental and intellectual faculties appertaining to it, he can conceive of that Alogical and transcendental principle of intelligence, the source and substratum of all, only in terms of his longings and desires. That 'something' corresponding to his notion of the Beyond certainly exists, but his inherent limitation, namely that he could come into contact with it only through the medium of certain instruments—his own mind and intellect—prevents him from knowing it as it is. He is forced to project, as the psychologists would say, his own needs, and the ideas based on them, on that Reality and interpret it in the light of such projection. The conceptions of the deity that he accordingly forms are not however illusions, as the psychologists would insist; for they are only adaptations of the Transcendental Reality of which the mind has always a vague notion.

Of all the forms in which man has thought of the Supreme Reality, that as the Father is perhaps the most widely accepted. That man should conceive of

Him as such certainly bespeaks the insistent need he feels for the paternal guidance of a benign personality, all-powerful and all-knowing, who would be a sure source of support and guidance to him in the bewildering and hostile environment in which he finds himself placed. But it is not the Father idea alone in which the deity has been clothed for the devotional purposes of man. Perhaps the same need as in that conception has led him to look upon the deity as the Great Mother of the Universe as well. This idea comes to our mind with a special force at this time of the year when the whole of India will be celebrating the great festival of nine days in honour of the Motherhood of God. The concept of Shakti or World as Mother-Power is, among other things, one of the most striking contributions of India to the world's religious and metaphysical thought. Indeed the worship of God as the Great Mother loomed large in the ancient religious thought and practices of the countries extending from the Euphrates to the Adriatic, but nowhere else outside India was this conception worked out to its fullest possibilities as a system of profound metaphysics and dynamic religion. We shall give below a brief exposition of the philosophical and religious conceptions that centre round this great idea of Mother-Power.

The characterisation of the Supreme as Shakti, the feminine principle, with Siva, or the male principle forming its counterpart, may provoke the criticism of some types of minds. Anthropologists would make short work of it by identifying it with some

form of primitive sex-worship, and masculine monotheists may scorn it as the religion of 'suffragist Vedantists'. But apart from the likes and dislikes of those who judge things by their roots rather than by their fruits, and the others who are dogmatically convinced of masculine predominance in the divine hierarchy, the concept of Shakti has much that is valuable to say about the nature of the Supreme, and still more to contribute to the enrichment of man's spiritual life. Between the thorough-going realist and the uncompromising monist, Shakti-Vada stands as a compromise and a reconciliation, maintaining on the one hand the unity of existence and on the other the reality of the world process. From the point of view of spiritual life it seeks to explain reality, not as a Siddha (perfected soul) would view it, but as a Sadhaka (aspirant) would do. It is therefore essentially practical in tone, and if it does not do anything else, it at least saves an aspirant after Advaitic realisation from getting stranded in philosophical subtleties, though it is not in itself devoid of ample scope for the play of the intellect.

What is Shakti, and what is Her relation to the Supreme Reality on the one hand, and the world of phenomena on the other? She is, according to Shakti-Vada, the dynamic side of the Supreme Reality which, though one without a second, has within it a dual aspect or polarity of experience. It is therefore called Siva-Shakti and forms the first Tatwa or category of the Shaktas. Indeed they admit a state of unlimited and undivided experience (Purna) in which even this polarity of being is not present. Shakti, who in Reality is not different from Siva, is therein blended in indistinguishable union with the latter, and can be spoken of as different only in the sense of a poten-

tiality. Reality is here conceived as the Alogical Whole, of which, like the Nirguna Brahman of the Upanishads, may be said, "It is beyond the grasp of word and mind." The Shaktas do not call it a Tatwa or category, because it transcends all human experience and is not in itself directly connected with the world order. But what acts as a nexus between this transcendental experience and the world of divided consciousness is Shakti who, though not different from it, is none the less manifesting Herself as this multifarious universe. Her first manifestation is what Shaktas call Siva-Shakti Tatwa. The absolute is here looked upon as endowed with creative impulse—Aham Bahu Syam (May I be many)—, and is therefore conceived as presenting itself as its own object. Shakti is this objectified form of the absolute in the creative process. She is in essence one with it, for if a second existence were admitted, duality would set in, and Shakti-Vada is essentially monistic. Like the absolute She is eternal (Anadirupa), infinite (Brahmarupa) and existence-knowledge-bliss (Satchidanandamayi). In the absolute as the transcendental (Parasamvit), She is one with it, but in the Siva-Shakti Tatwa the absolute is looked upon as having a duality of aspect within, in the form of a subject and object—the subject being Siva and the object Shakti who is nothing but Siva's own illuminating rays reflected and objectified before Himself. In man's consciousness the subject and the object are mutually exclusive and exist one outside the other. But in the supreme Siva-Shakti Tatwa and the four succeeding categories the subject and the object, which are Siva and Shakti, are not separated by mutual exclusion, but are only distinguished by a change of emphasis on the 'I' and 'This' (Aham and Idam) side of experience within

the Absolute itself. The Tantras compare Siva-Shakti to a grain of gram containing a divided seed within its encircling sheath, showing thereby the unity that encompasses these two kinds of experience in the Supreme Consciousness. In the language of symbols the Siva-Shakti Tatwa is represented subjectively as the metaphysical point (Bindu) and objectively as the geometrical point—the point symbolising the idea that infinite power is therein contracted infinitely before expressing itself as this wonderful world of names and forms. The idea is represented by a red point with a white line touching it on every side, the point and the line forming one inseparable whole representing Siva and Shakti respectively before the subject and object have become separate and mutually exclusive. In relation to the phenomenal world the Siva aspect is the passive, unconcerned witness, the changeless substratum of the dynamic world process, and Shakti who is none but Siva's objectification of Himself, is that dynamic Mother-Power who negates Her own perfection of identity with the absolute and presents first as the 'This' side (objective aspect) of experience in unified consciousness, and afterwards manifests Herself as the diversified world of name and form against the static background of Her counterpart, Siva. Some schools of thought that stress upon the static side of being or the subjective part of experience look upon this Tatwa as wholly Siva and subordinate Shakti to Him; but the Shaktas, who view Reality essentially from the dynamic standpoint, emphasise more upon Shakti and look upon Siva as only the static background for Her play. Siva by Himself is incapable of modification and is therefore a non-entity with regard to the manifested world. Therefore Sankaracharya says

in his *Soundarya Lahari*, "Only when united with Shakti has Siva the power to create, but without Her the Deva cannot even move." So according to the Shakti-Vada, the whole Reality (Siva-Shakti Tatwa) is Shakti Herself, the word Siva being used only to distinguish the subjective aspect of that same Reality forming a static background for its dynamic manifestation.

We have already stated above that the function of Shakti is to negate Her own perfection as absolute consciousness, and thereby bring forth this world of manifestation consisting of specialised centres of consciousness (Jivas) and the so-called gross and lifeless matter. Siva-Shakti Tatwa is the first stage of this process of objectification, and there are many other stages before the process culminates in the production of the gross, lifeless matter. The analysis of this process is very subtle, and we think it best to give here the masterly summary of it by Sir John Woodroffe. "Subject and Object in Pure Being are in indistinguishable union as the Supreme Siva-Shakti. We have then to see how this unity is broken into Subject and Object. This does not take place all at once. There are intermediate stages of transition, in which there is a Subject and an Object, but both are part of the Self, which knows its Object to be Itself. In man's experience they are wholly separate, the Object there being perceived as outside the Self, the plurality of selves being mutually exclusive centres. The process and the result are the work of Shakti whose special function is to negate, that is to negate Her own fullness, so that it becomes the finite centre contracted as a limited Subject perceiving a limited Object, both being aspects of the one divine Shakti. The first stage after the Supreme is that in which Shakti

draws Herself and lives, as it were standing by itself, the 'I' side (Aham) of what, when completed, is the 'I-This' (Aham Idam) experience. But simultaneously (for the 'I' must have its content) She presents Herself as 'This' (Idam), at first faintly and then clearly; the emphasis being at first laid on the 'I' and then on the 'This'. This last is the stage of Iswara Tatwa or Bindu, as the Mantra Sastras dealing with the causal state of sound (Sabda), call it. In the second and third stages, as also in the fourth which follows, though there is an 'I' and a 'This' and therefore not the undistinguishable 'I-This' or the Supreme Experience, yet both the 'I' and the 'This' are experienced as aspects of and in the Self. Then as preliminary to the division which follows, emphasis is laid equally upon the 'I' and the 'This'. At this point Maya Shakti intervenes and completely separates the two. For that Power is the sense of difference (Bheda Buddhi). We have now the finite centres, mutually exclusive one of the other, each seeing, to the extent of its power, finite centres as objects outside of and different from the Self. Consciousness thus becomes contracted. In lieu of being all-knowing, it is a 'Little-Knower,' and in lieu of being all-mighty power, it is a 'Little-Doer'."

Regarding this process of transformation, Shakti-Vada insists specially upon two points. In the first place the change that Shakti undergoes is not similar to the change of entity that we observe in this world when milk changes into curd. It is more like the change of condition than the change of entity. It is analogous to a light lighting other objects without in any way changing itself in the process. As the Upanishads say, "The whole universe has come out of the whole Brahman. Brahman is

still full although the whole universe has come out of It." In short the Shaktas hold that Shakti is able to maintain Her original character as the perfect and omnipotent Mistress of the universe while at the same time She is manifesting in truth and in reality the multifarious world of phenomena out of Her very stuff and being. In the second place, the universe being a transformation of Shakti Herself, who is Satchidanandarupini, it cannot be unreal. The world process is real, all forms from the most gross to the most subtle are real, bondage is real and Mukti (liberation) is also real. For Shakti, the one Reality, is the material and efficient cause of all phenomena and of all processes connected with it. The world of experience can therefore be in no sense called unreal or illusory. It is only limited reality in the sense of being limited in time, in comparison with the absolute and unconditioned experience of Chit as the Alogical Whole. As a necessary corollary to this doctrine the Shaktas hold that all forms of this world experience, whether they be conventionally called good or bad, conscious or unconscious, living or dead, are the manifestations of the eternally pure and unsullied Chit Shakti, and that perfection therefore lies in developing that faculty by virtue of which one can recognise Shakti in all sides of experience.

We are now in a position to state what Shakti is. Popularly She is spoken of as the Great Mother of the universe, the one Being who brings forth and nourishes the world and finally withdraws it into Herself. Philosophically this means that She is the Absolute in the dynamic and creative aspect, who in the first place manifests itself as its own object without being excluded from its aspect as the subject, and then appears as the diversified world of name and form, its being

however retaining the original perfection through all this process of manifestation. With regard to the world of phenomena She is the all in all—its sovereign Queen and Mistress. Siva, Her counterpart, is static and counts for nothing in the world play. She is the bestower of happiness in this world as well as liberation hereafter (मुक्तिमुक्तिप्रदायिनि). As the Maya Shakti, She limits Consciousness and makes the infinite and all-knowing appear limited and little-knowing in its individualised centres. As Maha Maya, again, She liberates the Jivas (individualised centres of consciousness), destroying the veils that hide their identity with the Supreme Reality. She is also spoken of in these two aspects as Vidya and Avidya—Vidya that carries the soul onward in the path of spiritual evolution and Avidya that binds its glory and degrades it to the level of insentieney.

For explaining the mystery of this profound and sublime philosophy, and concretising it to the gross vision of man, the Shakta scriptures have exhausted all forms of symbolisms relating to sound, diagram and human form. The innumerable Mantras or sound combinations, each one having a profound meaning, the various Yantras or ritualistic diagrams of which every point, curve and line bear deep significance, and the many Rupas or divine forms of Shakti, unsurpassed for their mystic beauty and unfailing suggestiveness—all these are the faint attempts of human imagination to render the inexplicable mystery of Being and Becoming into the universal language of pictures and symbols.

To those who are acquainted with the Hindu system of spiritual exercises (Sadhanas) the conception of Mantra will be quite familiar. Mantra

is Shakti in sound form. Sound (Sabda) as well as the object (Artha) representing it, has two forms, one subtle and the other gross. The external sound we hear with our ears and the external objects we see with our eyes are the gross expressions. The external sounds perish, and they differ in different languages in their reference to objects. But Sabda in its most rudimentary or universal state is always the same with all men even though they be speaking different languages. This universal aspect of Sabda consists in the original thought-movements which invariably precede their gross expression through speech. These thought-movements in relation to any object are the same with all people. The universal state of sound is Shakti is Sabda. So also, corresponding to the subtle Sabda, there is the subtle object (Artha) as distinguished from the gross object. In the perception of an object a part of the mind takes the form of the object and is turned into Vrittis (ripples) similar to the object. This mental impression is a subtle object, and in creative process it always precedes the gross object, since creation is a projection of the subtle impressions in the cosmic mind. While a part of the mind appears as the object, the other part of it remains as the perceiving agent. This perceiving aspect of mind is the subtle thought-movement which we call Sabda in the rudimentary stage, whose function it is to distinguish and to identify. Thus every perception involves the simultaneous functioning of the mind in these two subtle aspects as Sabda and Artha. Whenever Sabda distinguishes and identifies, the object also is necessarily called up. By the creative power of thought this subtle object can be made vivid and concrete. The Hindu theory of Mantra is based

upon this idea of the interdependence of sound and object. Sound in its cosmic aspect is Shakti as Sabda and is the primary root of all the Mantras. Through spiritual insight sages have discovered the various forms of Shakti and the Mantras (sound symbols) corresponding to these various manifestations of Hers as the giver of desires, liberator, illuminator, destroyer and so on. These Mantras are in no way different from the Devata Herself, for on the theory of correspondence between sound and object Her appropriate form always goes side by side with the Mantra pertaining to it. The Mantra is thus called the body of the Devata who resides in it as Mantra Shakti, and presents Herself to the aspirant who repeats it in the true spirit. Repetition does not mean simple movements of the lips, but vitalising thought through will, knowledge and action, and thereby bringing about the union of the Shakti residing in the aspirant with the Mantra Shakti. External repetition is only an aid to this mental process.

Just as Mantras are symbols of Shakti on the plane of sound, so also Yantras are diagrammatic presentations of the Divinity. Different forms of the Devata are represented by different Yantras. One of the most well known of these, and perhaps the greatest, is the Sree Yantra, representing Shakti in Her creative aspect and setting forth Her evolution into cosmos, through lines, curves and dots. The Yantra is the body of the Mantra, just as Mantra is that of the Divinity, and the same power which manifests to the ear in the Mantra is represented in the Yantra by lines and curves. Just as Mantra is not simply a combination of meaningless sounds but Shakti as sound, so too, to the mind of the worshipper, the Yantra appears to be the Divinity ex-

pressing Herself as the cosmos. The object of worshipping it is to attain union with Shakti as mind and matter and finally as Supreme Consciousness which is at the back of both. Through the Yantra the worshipper is able to realise the whole universe as divine, and the lines and dashes that compose it are no longer so many material objects in his eyes, but the living body of the divinity as expressed in the cosmos.

The Mantras and Yantras are rather subtle and complicated symbols of Shakti. It requires considerable intellectual culture and spiritual insight to understand and appreciate their true significance, although in practical spiritual life conviction derived from faith will entitle one to use them with great effect even in the absence of much theoretical knowledge. A more concrete representation of Shakti, more appealing to the imagination than sounds and diagrams, consists in the grand suggestive forms in which She is conceived for devotional purposes—forms which are not mere creations of human imagination, but which have an objective existence in the thought of the Supreme and have been manifest to the spiritual vision of purified worshippers (Upasakas) in all ages. We shall speak here of two of the most well-known of these forms—of Shakti conceived of as Tripura Sundari and as Kali. The first conception relates to Shakti in Her creative aspect. Mother Tripura Sundari is therefore represented in the form of a benign lady of ideal beauty. In the Ocean of Eternal Life (Amritarnava) in the Island of Gems (Mani Dwipa) symbolising the Bindu or the metaphysical point, in a Garden flooded with the fragrance of blooming celestial trees like Neepa, Malati, Champaka, Parijata, etc., etc., inhabited by countless

black bees and warbling birds, is the Mother's abode of Chintamani (wish-yielding gems). There, underneath a jewelled Mandapa is a golden throne, and the Mother is seated on two inert male bodies stretched on that throne. The upper one of white colour, alive and with eyes open, is Sakala Siva (Siva with attributes). He is alive because He is associated with Power, inert because it is Power alone that forms the active principle of creation, and white because he is consciousness and illumination (Prakasa). The other male figure, lifeless (Sava) and of slightly dark complexion, is Nishkala Siva (Siva without attributes). His special complexion indicates colourlessness (Vivarna), while His figure as a whole is a pictorial representation of the Shakta doctrine that Siva is powerless without Shakti.

The second conception we refer to, that of Kali, symbolises Shakti as the Destroyer. She is represented as a dark coloured female figure of formidable appearance, with lolling tongue, rolling eyes and dishevelled hair. She has four hands, with one of which She is giving boons and with another protection, while in the other two She holds a sword and a severed human head. She too stands on the body of Siva, inert like a corpse (Sava), for it is not He but She, His Shakti, that is taking back the world into Her being. She is naked to indicate that she is now without Her veil of Maya (Avarana) which She assumes in the process of creation and differentiation. Her only adornment consists of a garland of human heads which are popularly regarded as the heads of slain demons, but esoterically interpreted as the fifty-six letters of the alphabet, which as well as the universe of which they are the seed-Mantras, are now taken into Her being. The whole scene is laid in the cremation ground

with jackals and carrion birds pecking at human flesh; for the cremation ground is a symbol of cosmic dissolution. The Mother who seems so terrible in this guise to an ordinary individual appears to Her devotees as his benign Saviour who grants liberation after having destroyed his gross and subtle bodies.

The symbolic representation of Shakti as a woman has often raised a good deal of criticism from theists who are convinced of the masculine nature of God. In Sir John Woodroffe's words, a critic of this school once described Shaktism as "a worthless system, a mere feminisation of orthodox Vedanta—a doctrine teaching the primacy of the female and thus fit only for 'suffragist monists'". God as the absolute is neither male nor female nor neuter in the sense anatomists and sociologists use the terms, but 'God is Mother to the Sadhaka (of the Shakta school) who worships Her lotus feet, the dust of which are millions of universes.' Says the Devi in Devi Bhagavata, "That Male (Purusha) and myself are ever the same.....The Purusha is what I am, I am what the Purusha is.....O Aja, for the purpose of creation the difference arises at the time of creation. It is only the difference between the seen and the unseen. At the time of dissolution I am neither male nor female nor neuter. The difference is imagined only at the time of creation." According to Shakta scriptures, it is Shakti only that manifests in the universe both as the male and female principles, but they symbolically consider Shakti in Her creative aspect as the female, because it is the productive principle. On the basis of our worldly experience, the Shaktas have conceived of the Supreme Being as the Divine Mother, for like the human mother She is the more direct and active agent in the production and

nourishment of the world-child. They therefore look upon all women as symbolic of the Divine Mother in a special sense. As the Chandi says in a prayer addressed to the Mother, "O Mother, Thou art all knowledge, Thou art manifest as all women in the world." Rightly was it therefore given to a woman, the daughter of Sage Ambhrina to be the Rishi, through whom was revealed

the famous Devi Sukta of the Rig Veda which speaks of the glory of the Mother: "I am the Sovereign Queen, the Treasure of all treasures; the chief of all objects of worship, whose all-pervading Self all Devas manifest, whose birth place is in the midst of the Causal Waters; who breathing forth gives form to all created worlds and yet extends beyond them; so vast am I in greatness."

## ASHRAMA IDEAL IN POLITICS

*M. A. Venkata Rao, M.A.*

**T**HE cry is abroad that we must synthesise the old and the new. It is realised on all hands that there is a living continuity between the past, the present and the future, so that all reform must be rooted in the life of the past. All progress consists in adaptation and not in annihilation, of the old. But it is one thing to state the need and quite another to devise the *modus operandi* in terms of programme and ideal. It is universally recognised that the 'Ashrama' ideal both in its individual and social aspects constitutes the basic principle of Indian society. But the *dharma* or scheme of rights and duties in which the ideal was sought to be realised is no longer applicable in its pristine purity and innocent simplicity to the bewildering world of the present.

What is the message of the 'Ashrama' to the political world? The time has passed when statesmanship was a hereditary occupation of a single family or of a governing class. The time is gone by when a set of laws laid down by a few super-men, Manu or Mahomed, Solon or Calvin, could suffice for all our needs. Every problem of the modern State from the simplest to the most

complicated, from the rule of the road to matters of international policy, has passed beyond ordinary experience. Political wisdom acquired by the 'light of nature' is no longer sufficient for the needs of the modern world. Sir Josiah Stamp commented the other day in New York on the contrast between the old and new diplomacy. He related the story of a diplomat of the old order who was overwhelmed with the problems of finance. The modern democratic world has tried the solution of differentiating between the amateur politician who is the representative of the people and the permanent civil service which is responsible for the execution of policy. Decision and control are vested in the chosen leaders of the people. The framing of policy and the running of detail is a task of the expert. But this device is breaking down in country after country. The part-time politician is finding it impossible to cope with the complexity of the problems that he is called upon to face. The average representative of the people is everywhere feeling it impossible to find time, (even if he has the competence) to study all the ramifications of political and economical problems. He is content with

drifting and trusting to luck; and so the world moves on from accident to accident. The most vexed problem of the age is economic. The world is now divided among a few great nations. A high level of prosperity is maintained among them artificially by the control they exercise over the rest of the globe. This is essentially an unstable equilibrium. We want men now who can rise above national and other currents of feeling and point out with courage and single-minded devotion to truth the drastic revision in the economic policy which must be adopted by all the countries, if the world is to be saved from armageddon. Short-range adjustment and lack of comprehensive vision are the order of the day.

A new kind of leadership is therefore required to ensure orderly progress and rational control of situations based on scientific study and prediction. Society must be studied in a rational and systematic way with the help of statistical measurement. And uniform tendencies of behaviour, types of situation and the laws of their interaction must be patiently unravelled and mapped out in a purely objective spirit. The spirit of science must pervade the social outlook of the new leader. Passion and prejudice must be set aside. The idols of the tribe and the theatre, the market place and the cave must be sternly disregarded. Society must make room for and foster a class of men who can set aside the all but overwhelming currents of the day which are everywhere upsetting mental peace and creating bias. The first requisite, therefore, is a body of men who will have the pure ideal of knowledge and who will pursue truth at all costs. They will make it their life-aim to study the major problems of mankind—economic, political and cultural, and mark out the lines of advance in a clear and concrete way. Sociologists have

said that the progress of society is marked by the ascent of intelligence. Lester F. Ward calls this factor *Telesis* or control of the future based on prediction. We have to control the rate of increase of population, food and other items of production, the spread of disease, the outbreak of lawlessness and the universal tendency to exploitation. All the knowledge of the present must be focussed into comprehensive plans of reform. Thought, in the words of Whitehead, is the eternal lure for feeling. We become what we contemplate, according to Patanjali Yoga. If the national mind contents itself with orgies of sense-stimulation through the picture show, the cabaret and the dance hall, if it jumps helplessly from one extreme to another, from one passion to another, society becomes the happy hunting-ground for the charlatan and self-seeker, the political adventurer and the social upstart. "We must plan our civilisation or we perish," says Harold Laski, but does not suggest how. (*Grammar of Politics*). There must be some agency by means of which society can raise its mental and moral level. This does not happen by automatic means, by the increase of machinery, by the multiplication of wants or any of the paraphernalia of the modern fetish worship called 'progress.'

But it is one thing to know and quite another to do. Clearing the vision is no doubt a great thing but it is useless if it does not issue into action. In the pregnant phrase of Prof. Radhakrishnan, 'Light must become Life.' Europe is not now lacking in prophets. The idealists in the League of Nations and others outside—Gilbert Murray, Bertrand Russell, Romain Rolland, the Quaker Community and Pacifists of all countries have an inspiring ideal of a renovated world, founded on peace and concord. But the vision in their hearts

is weak and fitting. As Rousseau points out, the law-makers of old claimed Divine sanction, but that resource is denied to the secularism of the present day. He declared with remarkable insight that the only miracle which could win the consent of the masses must be performed 'in the soul of the reformer.' But our moderns lack the strength of spirit to move athwart the whole course of events, face the currents of feeling and seek to control the national mind even at the cost of martyrdom if necessary. This brings us to a new meaning of the Ashrama ideal in the social sphere. The world needs not only self-dedication for the work of thought but also self-dedication for converting thought into reality. Here the old Indian insight that all knowledge, all beauty, all righteousness must become personal before they can be complete is a source of inspiration. Even philosophy in India is not a matter of intellectual dialectic but of integral experience. The test of an ideal is its happy working in the medium of personality. The only genuine verification of spiritual ideals lies in the stuff of experience. Spiritual nuclei in the form of Ashramas dotted all over the country are seeds of healthy growth and may yet be the source of saving the world. In the absence of a body of men pledged to righteousness, whose one passion in life is to make that righteousness prevail in the world outside, at whatever cost of personal suffering and sacrifice, society becomes the arena where conflicting interests clash, the battleground of classes and the prey of chance. That is why the advice of the economists of the world in Conference regarding Tariffs remained impotent. This is a mental environment in which dictators thrive and flourish. Propaganda becomes the rule of the day. False prophets abound. The state of

Europe at the present day is fraught with danger.

There is unmitigated dictatorship in Italy where there is no pretence of convincing the opponent. National egoism, naked and unashamed, rules the day. This is a state of unstable equilibrium. The neighbours are uneasy, the suppressed classes within are restless. In Germany, nationalist organisations are growing militant. There seems to be a great desire to wipe out the disgrace of the war and the theory of German War Guilt. Unscrupulous adventurers are mobilising the forces of passion and prejudice in favour of quack remedies and shortcuts to salvation. Heroism, determination and self-sacrifice are harnessed to political idealism in Russia but it is an idealism, harsh and narrow and intolerant. The communists have built their State on a theory and they dare not allow a generation to grow up with no faith in that theory.

The only way for peaceful and orderly progress is for each society to make room for little knots of communities of men inspired with the vision of eternal peace. Every society must let them free to think and carry on their way of life in an unfettered manner even though their ideals might conflict with the passions of the day or the interests of the powerful. Instead of suppressing the pacifists and other idealists as traitors, the State must find a place for them. Of course, it is entitled to ask for guarantees, bonafides and moral integrity. It is open to the State to require that no actual treachery is rendered possible in these Ashramas. Instead of spying upon and harassing the dreamers of international peace, the State might very well watch them carrying on a way of life in little communities in the full blaze of publicity. Society needs architects of reconstruction who meditate upon plans and live

a life of discipline so that the body and the mind may be the willing servants of the ideal. It requires thought, no doubt, to invent mechanical devices. It requires concentration of mind to organise their utility; but it requires a greater '*tapas*' to build with the bricks of human nature. For this a greater and more prolonged system of self-training—*pratyahara*—or detachment from the senses and the control of *manas* are required. This technique of self-discipline described at length in the

Yoga, and still a living tradition in India, applied by self-dedicated souls in the service of social idealism, offers the only basis for durable peace and betterment. Only such discipline can develop fearless readiness for self-sacrifice and it is only a life of utter sincerity and self-denial that can convert the world. It may be that Shantiniketan and Sabarmati are the two aspects of an identical contribution that India is making to the reconstruction of the world.

## ETHICS OF THE UPANISHADS

By Dr. Mahendranath Sirkar, M.A., Ph. D.

(Continued from page 159)

### (7) Types of Wise Men

THE wise man, instead of passing into the quiet of retirement, can live an active life; for this is merely a question of habit and past accommodation. It must be pointed out that activity and passivity are of the relative consciousness, and does not in the least affect the emancipated consciousness. Emancipation is the transcendence of the relativistic consciousness. Activism and passivism are adaptations, ethical and biological.

There are cases where the light of wisdom is so clear, and life is so finely attuned that it casts no influence if the wise man lives in the turmoil of life. They have the vivid knowledge of the self which does not allow the least ripple of being, and they can adapt in any situation favourable or unfavourable, because the secret of life stands clearly revealed before them. And the poise of their being has attained such a perfection as would allow the exact reflection of Truth. And, naturally, retirement from or participation in active life would not make the least

difference. They are perfectly installed in Truth; quietism and activism are for them only adjustments and adaptations, but not wisdom.

This type is singularly blessed. Their being is transparent enough to reflect the Truth. No less sensitive is it to reflect the forces which determine the outward conduct. This unique fitness is possible because of the transparent nature which keeps them aware of transcendence. It also enables them to evaluate the forces which give them the right adaptation. But this adaptation is more spontaneous than volitional, for the liberated consciousness is free from egoistic bent.

The wise man, therefore, in every case does not seek retirement. In cases where the mind cannot with ease settle down and where the psychic being is not transparent enough to reflect Truth, retirement and psychic discipline have necessity, even after illumination, to make life completely fixed in transcendence. But where the psychic being has a transparent fineness to reflect Light, life can never deflect away from

it, and through all its movements active or passive, it is always pointed to that Light.

These two types are represented in the Upanishads in Janaka the King and Yajnavalkya the Sage. Yajnavalkya was the teacher in the court of Janaka and used to give illuminating discourses on the Transcendent Truth. In fact, he is the principal teacher in the Upanishads. Janaka used to take active interest in these discourses. He was the central figure of the esoteric circles that used to meet in his palace. Yajnavalkya once remarked to Janaka, "You are installed in fearlessness." (i. e. all mortal fears have left him because he has illumination.) We are told that Yajnavalkya passed into the life of silent contemplation leaving his wives alone. He took up the life of renunciation. But Janaka continued to be the King. This illustrates the difference between the two types. Yajnavalkya got the light but his being needed retirement to make the light a living light for him. But Janaka was above such requirement.

But the emancipated consciousness has the effect of expansion upon moral life, and in cases where the mental and vital forces are strong, the dawn of wisdom has the force of expansion. The emancipated consciousness goes beyond the contraries of moral life, and is led by cosmic impelling. Their expansive vision and transcendence put them on a superior plane and their ethics cannot be all on a par with the ethics as usually understood and as commonly practised. The rigidity of the latter is displaced by the elasticity of the former but this elasticity dispenses with the conflicts of the practical life and places the adept beyond the categories of common morality.

The freedom from the restricted consciousness has the effect of sudden ex-

pansion of being and the acquisition of new powers, for the man of emancipated consciousness has the veils after veils of ignorance withdrawn from him and he becomes intimate with the secret powers and forces that play unseen and undiscovered. The whole of nature stands under his survey, because the vision of identity is not only a theoretical possibility, and when this theoretical possibility is actually realised, it means the opening of the finer psychological possibilities which endow the adept with niceties of vision and wealth of power. And since he stands above the limitation of personality, he naturally cannot be bound down by the ethics of personality. He is often a mystery to the mean intelligence, for he is not governed by the human ethical code. He stands beyond virtue and sin, good and evil, right and wrong—he is above the rigidity of moral life, for the ethics of preparation cannot be the ethics of consummation.

Moreover in such lives the forces begin to move cosmically, and therefore they become the source of uncommon powers, possessors of unheard of wisdom and promulgators of great movements. The condition of unhindered power is not, therefore, a condemnation but rather a commendation, as it demonstrates unmistakably that the emancipated consciousness is beyond the restriction of a common life.

The ideal appears not strictly moral to the superficial observer, because the ethics of personality has such a charm for us, that not unoften the ethics of preparation is thought to be highest moral ideal, and from distance it is not possible to judge the elasticity and freedom of a free life. The Jivan Mukta is freed from the sense of compulsion, from the sense of responsibility, and when he moves, he moves on by the cosmic urges.

The moral rigidity in the life of preparation is displaced by the elasticity of being in the life of consummation. This elasticity is the fruit of wisdom. But this elasticity is no elasticity of the vital being with its desires and impulses, with its sense of increased life and activity, with its pleasures, joys and gratifications. This elasticity is, in fact, the truly spiritual expansion of our being freed from the sense of conflict or from the sense of hedonic relaxation and impulsion of being. This elasticity has an effect upon the complex texture of our being. It produces a harmony between all the parts of our existence. The higher psychic forces are not in conflict with the vital forces. The loss of the sense of agency has the great effect of the infusion of fine powers into our being, for the sense of restraint which agency implies restricts the free and harmonious flow of life, vitality and ideas and powers. But elasticity touches every part of our being, and in this lies the secret of freedom, and Karma has no hold upon the liberated soul, because he is above the conceit of agency.

The conceit of agency creates the sense of moral obligation and responsibility, and when the self is freed from it, the question of responsibility cannot rise for him. The more the self is freed from the restricted being of agency, the more it is detached; the more it is fixed in its own being; the more the secret forces begin to reveal themselves through it. The liberated soul becomes the wielder of powers, though all along he knows he is far above and beyond them. Nature has in its gifts these privileges for the soul who is bold enough to forsake and wise enough not to seek them. Detachment is the secret of rare powers, and whether one wills or not, the soul seeking and practising transcendence becomes the posses-

sor of uncommon powers. He may or may not exercise them. So wide and deep is the life of knowledge that these uncommon powers are looked upon with no concern.

Professor Keith thinks that the emancipation is merely a condition of unhindered power, the ideal of a despot (p. 587).

This shows the lack of sympathetic insight into the ideals of the Upanishads. Emancipation is the freedom from the restriction of an individual self. True, the emancipated soul gets to the essence of being and is therefore not limited by the common ethical code. This acquaintance with the basic being, because of its being not merely intellectual, has wide implications in the concrete life, if life continues after the first glimpse of Light.

Spiritual insight is not purely an intellectual understanding, nor merely an occasional insight. True spirituality is the unceasing consciousness of the unity wherein the vital-mental complex stands revealed and completely exposed. Emancipation is not a mere logical concept, it is a psychological revelation, and implies a psychological rearing up. But the psychological revelation has a tremendous moulding effect upon the entire nature of the adept, and its influence penetrates into every part of our being and transforms the mental and the vital covers.

The philosopher walks with his intellectual apprehension, leaving the rest of his being to adapt according to the conditions of normal ethics. The adept lives the truth, supra-intellectual. The spiritual insight into such a truth has its practical bearing in all parts of our complex being. Intellect becomes intuitive, feeling rises into fine shades of blessedness. The man is completely re-born. So great is the opening that the life's adaptation becomes completely

transformed. The mental and vital planes are no longer disturbed by the individual instincts, but are exercised by the inflow of the cosmic life and insight. The adept shines in a new splendour.

Spirituality is not an expression in emotion, nor an indulgence in sentimentality. Spirituality is something superior to religion as ordinarily understood. It is the life of vision and a life of complete transformation. The spiritual insight does not leave the lower nature cold. It affects a complete change in that part of being. Its influence permeates through the vital and the mental being, so that the supramental truth can be effective on the vital-psychical planes.

Whenever there has been such a call there has been unhesitatingly a separation from and a forsaking of the wonted course of life, for this call comes from the deep of being. The call may come in any stage of life, before or after illumination, but whenever it comes, it comes with an irresistible force. The call for illumination is to be distinguished from the call for realisation. The former is a call for preparation and training, the latter for unbroken illumination. Both require a fitness, but the fitness for illumination is to be distinguished from the fitness for its continuity. In both cases the vital and

the mental being are to be purified and sharpened, but in the latter they should be made gradually so transparent that the spiritual life can have the medium completely fit for its expression.

The Jivan Muktas may not differ amongst themselves in their illumination, and they make no difference in the logical sense. Logically Jivan Mukti implies the crossing of ignorance. But psychologically a difference exists between the Jivan Muktas, and this difference is indicated in the texts (Mundaka) in the conception of Brahnavit, Brahnavitvara, Brahnavitvarishta. Logically they are in the same category, for they have crossed ignorance, but life is greater than logic, and with the fineness of our psychic being a difference in the power and illumination of the psychic being naturally results. The transcendence is the same everywhere, but the fineness of psychic being and vision is not the same in these stages. The finer the psychic being, the greater is the possibility of illumination being sustained longer. This psychic being is reared up by discipline, it is the evolution of the finest mentality. The finer the mentality, the greater is the illumination. The forces of our being become wonderfully balanced as the supramental light is focussed through the psychic being.

## SPANISH MYSTICISM

*By*

*Prof. J. Mascaro M.A., (Cantab.)*

SINCE the dawn of History, in different countries and climates, there have been human hearts and minds that have felt the call of the Great Beyond. That there is a Truth in the Universe, that there is a Law, that there is an illimitable Love, Dante's "l'Amor che move il sole ol' altre stelle (Love that moves the sun and the other stars)" has been deeply felt again and again by the mystics of the East and the West.

In mysticism we have voices that speak to us from experience. They may belong to different religions, but their final experiences transcend the ritual and the dogma of their respective creeds. They all go to the final goal, and the final goal that they seek is one and the same. The Parameshvara, the infinite Spirit of the Universe, is not the private property of any especial religion or sect.

Europe has not produced a religion. Of the five great religions of the world, three were born in or near Palestine, two in India. But this does not mean that great religious people have not come from Europe. How great some of them were, a brief survey of Spanish mysticism will show us.

For some seven hundred years (711—1492) the Arabs were in Spain, and until the beginning of 12th century they held most of the Peninsula. In the same year of 1492 that the Arabs were driven out of Granada, their last refuge in Spain, the Spaniards were discovering the vast continent of America. In the next century, the

Spanish Emperor Charles V wielded the greatest individual power that probably any man has ever had on the earth or may have in times to come. It was during his reign, and during the reign of his son, that there lived the greatest mystics of the Spanish school.

Leaving aside Islamic mysticism, that flourished with great splendour in Spain, nearly all the Spanish mystics lived and died with the 16th century. Whilst Spanish pioneers were discovering new worlds, Spanish saints were exploring the infinite regions of their selves, and discovering wonderful holy lands in their own souls. I believe that the sudden outburst of mysticism in some religious minds of Spain was due in part to the same enthusiasm that gave fire and light to the Spaniards of that century in all branches of human activity.

No great mystics are known in Spain after 1600 and only one before 1500. Ramon Lull (1235-1315) stands as a great medieval figure. He was born in the beautiful little island of Majorca, off the coast of Spain, in the Mediterranean, in the same century when Italy gave to Europe three of its greatest religious men, and one of the greatest poets the world has produced: the angelic St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226), St. Bonaventura (1221-1274), St. Thomas Aquinas (1226-1274), a mystic and one of the greatest thinkers of Europe, and the sublime poet Dante (1265-1321).

Ramon Lull came from a distinguished Catalan family and his father

went with King James I to conquer Majorca from the Arabs in 1229. In his youth he was a page in the Royal House and much addicted to the pleasures of the world. At the age of thirty-one he had a vision of the Christ and his attitude to the world was changed. He sold his property and distributed it to the poor, retaining some for his wife and children, took the Franciscan robe, retired to a mountain of the Island, and there he remained for several years spending his time in meditation and contemplation. There he collected thoughts and emotions for his first works. He travelled several times through Europe, parts of Asia and North Africa, seeing Kings and Popes, preaching and teaching his philosophy. He founded the first College of Oriental Languages in Europe in a beautiful mountain of Majorca near the sea. He wanted to convert the whole of Islam to Christianity through argumentation and love and not by the sword. He met a cruel death in his 80th year at a sea port in North Africa where he was stoned to death by an Arab mob.

His work is an encyclopaedia of the knowledge of his time. More than 300 works are attributed to him. He wrote in his own native language Catalan and not in Latin, thus being the first European to write philosophy in a vernacular language.

His mysticism is concentrated in his little treatise "The Book of the Lover and Beloved." This work is composed of 369 short prose paragraphs. The prose is fluid, clear and nearly always intensely poetical. In the following verse it is filled with sweet longing:—

"The paths whereon the lover goes in search of his Beloved are long and perilous. They are peopled with thoughts, signs and tears. They are illumined by love."

Sometimes Lull reminds us of the Indian mystics, of their identification of God with Nature :

"The birds were singing the dawn, and the Beloved, who is the dawn, awoke ; and the birds finished their song, and the Lover died in the dawn for his Beloved."

A touch of Oriental humour is felt in the following verse :

"The Lover was sitting alone in the shade of beautiful tree : And men passed by and asked why he was sitting alone : the Lover answered. I am alone, now that I am hearing and seeing you. Until now I was in the Company of my Beloved."

Sometimes he concentrates in a few sublime lines the essence of the Yoga doctrine :

"The light of the Beloved's chamber came to illumine the Chamber of the Lover, that darkness might be dispolled and that it might be filled with joys, longings and thoughts. And the lover cast everything out of his Chamber to make room for the Beloved."

The life of St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), who opens the golden era of Spanish mysticism, was as full of adventure as that of Ramon Lull. The son of a noble family in the North of Spain, he was an officer in the Spanish army until the age of thirty. He had to lie long in bed as a result of a serious wound received in battle, and during that time his mind pondered on the eternal problems of man. After living for a time in a cave in the sacred mountain of Monserrat, in the north of Barcelona, he went to Rome and Palestine, and at the age of 33 he started to learn Latin with the children at a school in Barcelona. He went to the University of Paris and to London during a summer vacation, and after several years of residence in Paris took

his M.A. Degree at that University at the age of 44. Long was his struggle before the dream of his life could be fulfilled—the foundation of the Society of Jesus. But difficulties seemed to increase his energy. It has been said of St. Ignatius that "he was a mystic, but his mysticism made him assuredly one of the most powerful human engines that ever lived."

His spiritual exercises, which with his letters constitute practically all his work, are a model of exposition of practical spirituality expressed in a forcible and concentrated form. I shall only refer to his three ways of prayer. The first is oral prayer. The second is mental prayer, when the mind meditates on the meaning of each word of the prayer. The third is rhythmic prayer. The breath is indrawn, and whilst it is resting in the body (Skt. Kumbhaka) the mind concentrates on the first word of a prayer. The breath is drawn out and drawn in again and then the mind meditates on the second word etc., by rhythmic breath. I have not seen a satisfactory commentary on this prayer of St. Ignatius: a comparative study of the same and of the Pranayama in Yoga might lead to very interesting conclusions.

Leaving aside St. Francis Xavier, well-known in India, we can go to the Franciscan, Francisco de Osuna (1497-1542). We know very little of his life, but we have his works in Latin and Spanish. His greatest works which he called spiritual alphabet reveal that intense practical spirituality which characterised the Spanish mystics of the golden age. They are not satisfied with uttering a few songs of longing love. They want some concrete mental ways whereon the soul may walk towards the Great Goal.

"Three ideas" says Osuna, "want we to give to those that seek God. The

first is that friendship and communication with God are possible in this life, ..... the second that, since God is impartial to all beings, this communication is not less possible to you, Oh man, whoever you may be, than to others..... The third is that in order to seek this communication it is necessary that the soul should have a continual intense longing and stop not until the goal is reached.....". The work of Osuna had a great influence on St. Teresa and was her guide in her first struggle towards light. In spite of its importance there is no single translation of it in English.

St. Peter of Alcantara (1499-1562) is one of the most sympathetic figures of that age. The son of a very important noble family on the frontier of Portugal, he was sent to Salamanca University at an early age. At the age of fifteen he took the Franciscan robe, and his sanctity being soon recognised by his brothers in the Order at twenty, he was made Superior of a monastery. The king of Portugal called him to his court several times to consult him on high problems of the State. In the last years of his life he had a great personal influence on St. Teresa, who has left some charming descriptions of his personality. She tells us that during forty years of his life he only slept an hour and a half a day, and never covered his head or his feet during that time. His cell was about five feet long, and he slept in it sitting on the floor. His austerities seem to have been rewarded with great miraculous powers. People saw him several times rising in the air, rapt in contemplation. Unfortunately he wrote very little. Only a little work of his is known—his "Treatise on Prayer and Meditation" that was soon translated into English. I think, however, that only part of this book was composed by him.

Through want of space, I can only mention the names of the great preacher Juan de Avila (1500-1569), the Franciscan Juan de los angeles (1536-1609) and Diego de Estella (1524-1578), also a Franciscan. The chief work of Estella, "A Hundred Meditations on the Love of God" was translated into English by the English Jesuit, Robert Southwell (1561-1595). The manuscript was lost and edited during the last century as an original work of Southwell, and the last editions of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and of the *Catholic Cyclopaedia* still mention this work as the original of Southwell.

The Dominican Luis de Granada (1504-1588) occupies a great position in Spanish literary history. He is the first great Spanish mystic to use the vernacular in a literary way. Ramon Lull had indeed preceded him by 300 years, but he had written in Catalan, and not in Castilian, the language that became the chief language in the Peninsula and is now spoken by some ninety million people, in nineteen independent countries.

Luis de Granada has been called the "Cicero of Spain," and certainly by the majesty of his prose he deserves that epithet. He was besides the greatest preacher of his time, and his name was known all over Europe. His works that are very numerous including those in Latin, were published in several printing houses of Europe, and some of them were soon translated into several European languages.

Luis de Leon (1527-1591) studied at Salamanca where he soon joined the Augustinian Order, and afterwards became Professor of Theology at that famous University. He translated parts of the Old Testament into beautiful Spanish and also translated some Greek and Latin poems. He was a great classic scholar, and in his

original work both in prose and verse he, like Luis de Granada, has become classic in Spanish. His prose is perhaps the most beautiful ever written in Spanish, purely from the point of view of style, and if his original poetical production is very limited, some of his poems can rank amongst the greatest in European literature. The north star of those two greatest religious men was continually their Beloved.

We come now to the two greatest figures of Spanish mysticism. They are the moon and the sun of the mystic sky: St. Teresa (1515-1582) and St. John of the Cross (1542-1591).

Born of a most virtuous family of some distinction in the little town of Avila in the west of Spain, St. Teresa gave to God from her earliest years her best thoughts and purest love. She became a nun at a Carmelite convent at a very early age, but it was not until she was past forty that the doors of interior heaven were open to her and she enjoyed the ineffable bliss of contact with the Beloved. She started a reform of her Order, and before her death she founded some thirty convents. She had to struggle against great difficulties, but the courage of a great man dwelt in the heart of that kindest of women, and she succeeded in her divine intentions. She wanted her spiritual daughters to enjoy the highest states of spirituality.

Her works are delightful reading even from a purely literary point of view, though naturally they lose a deal in being translated from the Spanish. She is always human, she wrote as if speaking; a delightful touch of humour, and simple and homely similes gave life to her narrations; she touches the sublime at many a point, and we feel in reading her works that we hear the words of probably one of

the greatest women that have lived on this earth. Her chief works, from a spiritual point of view, are her *Life* and *The Interior Castle*, besides several others, and several hundred letters. The essence of her teaching is this.

Our soul is a garden where flowers and foul weeds grow; these are our virtues and our vices. We must have the virtues and take care to water our garden with the waters of prayer, and the Lord himself will come one day to meet us amongst the flowers. The garden can be watered in four ways; by drawing water from a well, it is hard; by a water-wheel and buckets drawn by bullocks, it is easier; or the Lord may send rain from the sky, then the garden is watered at its best with no effort on our part. These four waters correspond to the four degrees of prayer. With the last water the divine rain of grace comes. The four degrees of prayer are: prayer of recollection, when all the faculties of the soul are indrawn; prayer of quiet, when love is peacefully reposing on the Lord, though memory and understanding may wander about dreams of the senses, when the three faculties are resting on the Beloved, prayer of union, where human consciousness is lost and only divine consciousness remains. After that the spiritual marriage takes place; the soul is merged in the divine soul as water falling into the sea or as sunlight coming from two windows and merging in a room. In the ecstatic state, breath stops, the circulation of the blood gets paralysed, the body becomes rigid. Notice the correspondence of these stages with *Pratyahara*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi* in *Yoga*. Supernatural phenomena sometimes take place. St. Teresa describes most vividly her impressions when she first felt her body rising from the ground into the air.

St. John of the Cross was born from a very modest family, but succeeded in joining the Carmelite Order and was sent to the University of Salamanca where he studied several years and took Holy Orders. He met St. Teresa when he was about twenty-seven and she was already fifty-four. She induced him to start the reform of the Carmelite friars. He suffered subsequently a nine months' imprisonment at the hands of some friars of his Order who did not like the austerity of the reform, and he suffered during that time much moral and physical torture. Like St. Peter of Alcantara he was known for his austerities. He has left us four main works in prose and a few poems. His poems are the greatest lyrics in Spanish, and I believe the greatest mystic poems in any European language. The three most important ones are:—The Dark Night of the Soul, Flame of Living Love, and Spiritual Canticle. His prose works are long commentaries on these poems.

In many ways St. John of the Cross, whom I should place still higher than St. Teresa, offers a contrast to that wonderful woman saint. His work in bulk is much more limited. He never tells anything of his own life or personality. Whilst St. Teresa's work is permeated with a delightful realism, St. John of the Cross is the most metaphysical of the Spanish mystics. He seems to have left the material world so far behind that his mind is continually scanning the Infinite. The centre of his teaching is that love transforms us into the object we love. If we love earth, we become earth, if we love God we become transformed into God. He says: "If thou attachest thyself to some thing, thy soul cannot plunge into the All". "God will never be reached through love by those who love His things more

than they love Him". Thus he introduces us to his famous and mysterious "Dark Night of the Soul". The pleasures of the senses have to be abandoned: that is the dark night of the senses. Then in the darkness of faith we must go through the terrible nights of the understanding, memory and will; but the dawn of divine light will come and the wanderer will find himself face to face with the Beloved. The Beloved is everywhere and in one of his poems St. John of the Cross exclaims: "My Beloved, Thou art the mountains, the silent solitary valleys, the strange far away Islands, the sounding rivers, the whistling of the breezes."

St. John of the Cross stands high amongst those torch-bearers of humanity, who in the dark night of our souls, show us the path to the Great

Beyond. Well could he say with a joyful assurance in one of his poems:

"For well know I the fount that flows and runs, although it is dark".

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*Bibliographical Note* :—There are good translations in English of the works of St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross by the Benedictines of Stanbrook Abbey and D. Lewis.

The two volumes of Prof. E. Allison Peers, *Studies of the Spanish Mystics*, are of value to English readers chiefly for their translations and bibliography, and they are practically the only works in English on the subject. In touching the more subtle points in mysticism and purely literary criticism there is, however, a good deal of controversial matter in the work of Prof. Peers. It must also be remembered that Spanish mysticism produced some four thousand works during its golden age and the age following it. Many of them are still unedited. A serious historical survey of that great spiritual movement may not be possible for years to come.

## VEDANTA IN THE MAKING

*By Dr. Sarojkumar Das, M.A., (Cal.) Ph. D. (London)*

WHILE ceasing to claim immutable perfection for the hymns of the R̥gveda, the more rational procedure would be to recognise distinct levels of perfection in the R̥gveda without prejudice to its integrity or inner continuity. As a matter of fact, continuity of process, as we have recently learnt, does not demand that the last phase of it should be prefigured in the very first, but that it is perfectly commensurate with the emergence of real differences in respective levels of the process. Such is undoubtedly the case with the different strata of the R̥gveda against the background of a thought-continuity—not surely an 'unbroken' continuity, if by that were meant one, exclusive of real differences. For, as

the late Professor Wallace taught us long ago, 'all development is by breaks and yet makes for continuity'. There is, of course, no unanimity on the question of strata in R̥gvedic thought. The stratification that will meet the ends of a philosophical study is the threefold one of naturalistic polytheism, monotheism, and agnostic monism along with henotheism, pantheism, and panentheism as their correlates in their varied permutation and combination. As already observed, the inherent syncretism of the R̥gvedic thought and culture makes it well nigh impossible to mark off one stratum rigidly from another, each being essen-

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7. Wallace, *Prolegomena to Hegel's Logic* (2nd ed.), p. 476.

tially a composite structure comparable more or less to the Anaxagorean "*Homoiomere*," according to which 'in all there is something of all.' Now, as in the case of all first beginnings of a 'thinking consideration of things' in the Hegelian sense, the naturalistic polytheism of the R̥gveda is a conglomerate mass of religions, mythology and philosophy, or science in the wider sense of the term, the pivot of which is a full and frank recognition of a plurality of gods. It must be distinctly understood, at the very outset, that the anthropological interest in the Vedic religion gives an initial misdirection to all dispassionate enquiry by assimilating it to animism, spiritism and the like. This serves only to mystify the issue instead of focussing its light on the central theme. The R̥gvedic religion, whatever else it might be, is not an anthropological specimen merely. It is, in all conscience, a naturalistic polytheism, and not a polytheistic, or any other type of naturalism. It is no less different from naturalism in the modern sense of the term, than it is from the Greek prototype of the case in Hylozoism. Then, again, the religion of the R̥gveda, although mainly nourished by its interest in the operations of nature or natural phenomena, is as much a natural as a social religion.

The *Devas* or gods of the R̥gveda have had, like us mortals, their share of vicissitudes at the hands of its interpreters. Some are of opinion that it is one and the same God that beams through the protean masks of godhood, and, therefore, its apparent polytheism is but a masked monotheism. Some, again, hold, in deference to the realities of the situation, as also a preponderately theistic interest, that the gods are only 'the allegorical representations of the attributes of the Supreme Deity.' Others, again, believe the gods to be

mere magic formulæ in the keeping of Levitical priesthood of a primitive people. Sāyana, whose commentary on the R̥gveda stands to this day as the very monument of orthodox scholarship, favours a naturalistic interpretation of the gods. Although it sounds paradoxical, all of these explanations, and none of these, are at once true,—in as much as each contains only a fragment of truth, the highest plausibility belonging, of course, to Sāyana's interpretation. Now, the plurality of the *Devas* is frankly based on their functional differences. To put it bluntly, a *Deva* is what he does—a category that is comprehensive enough to include the functions he is authoritatively invested with<sup>8</sup>. Accordingly, those who exploit, in the interest of non-dualism or singularism, the promiscuous naming of the gods, and the constant interchange of their functions, overlook this basic fact. It is their contention, pure and simple, that there is no distinction between the gods in respect of names and functions, and that this distinction between the gods has not been recognised because of their oneness in respect of substantive or essential existence. What detracts from the cogency of this argument is the simultaneous acknowledgment made by these very people, following the *Nirukta*<sup>9</sup>, that all the gods are but the members of One Supreme Spirit. The metaphor that is drawn upon in this regard by the R̥gveda itself, viz., that of 'branches of a tree'<sup>10</sup>, is equally suggestive. What these two telling examples conclusively establish, by force of their logical implication, is that the gods maintain their

८ देवो दानाद्वा दीपनाद्वा द्योतनाद्वा युक्त्यानो वा भवन्ति—*Nirukta*.

९ एकस्यात्मनोऽन्ये देवाः प्रत्यंगानि भवन्ति—

*Nirukta*, vii, 4.

10 e. g. in V. 40 v.

integrity and individuality—a functional difference, at least, though not a substantive one—without prejudice to the notion of distinction, without a difference, in the unity of the whole. There is no sense in speaking of the gods as parts or members of a unity—no matter whether it is the unity of a *socius*, or a self-conscious being—unless these parts or members are recognised as such in the unity of the whole. Whether this 'membership' in question stands committed to the Hegelian principle of 'unity-in-difference' need not deter us here; but what it clearly demands is the recognition that the so-called 'members' are not like 'elements' massed together in a distinctionless unity—of the type of the 'Absolute' in which all cows are black. For, after all, there is a world of difference between an 'element' and a 'member' of a whole, and it is only by an abuse of language that the two can be used synonymously.

Here as elsewhere, Yaska's interpretation seems to be on the true line of advance, so far as it allows full latitude to varieties of function as the basis of multiple designations of each god. (एकैकस्या अपि बहूनि नामधेयानि भवन्त्यपि वा कर्मप्रयुक्तान्—*Nirukta*, *Daivatakan-dam*, vii, 5.). It is on this basis that he proceeds to classify the Vedic gods, and proposes a triadic classification of these into terrestrial, aerial and celestial, corresponding to the three regions of *prithivi*, *antariksham* and *dyaauh*. Thus is laid the foundation of a science of mythological interpretation recognised by Yaska—the *Adhidaivata*, the *Aitihasika*, the *Adhiyajna* and the *Adhyatmika* school. Of these the *Adhyatmika* school of mythological interpretation which, in its enunciation of self as the central principle of explanation, distinctly anticipates the main

findings of the Samkhya and Vedanta systems of thought, is worthy of our attention. Starting from the *Purusha-sukta* (Rg. x. 90.) there is to be found a persistent effort to institute a close correspondence and affinity between the microcosm and the macrocosm. In the *Purusha-sukta* itself, the gods are made out to be the agents of creation, and the body of the great *Purusha* the stuff of which the world is made. The creation act is figuratively spoken of as a sacrifice with 'the Supreme *Purusha* himself as forming the victim.' Muir is staggered at the sacrilegious 'profanity' <sup>11</sup> of such a representation. Those who bring an open mind to bear on the question would much rather testify to the profundity and grandeur of the theme. Leaving aside its later symbolism together with all its fantastic speculations, one is constrained to admit the force of its philosophic implication. Creation is herein conceived as a self-abnegation or a self-denying ordinance on the part of the Creator. It is suggestive of an original self-heterisation and a passing over into the otherness of an external world as a point of extreme self-alienation. There can be, indeed, no suggestion of 'profanity' in a case of self-immolation or self-sacrifice—a voluntary acceptance, on the part of the Creator, of the bondage of creation. Thus is also secured a fundamental oneness of essence between the world within and the world without, between the subjective and the objective, without the suggestion of a basic dualism, which is too likely to creep into any story of creation that is not otherwise armed against a radical antithesis between the two. What is further, noteworthy here from the philosophic point of view is the prescription of the anthropomorphic method

11. Vide Sanskrit Texts, Vol. V. p. 373.

(पुरुषविद्याः)<sup>13</sup> which has undoubtedly its use so long as it is saddled with safeguards. On the application of this method, what is interpreted as regards the gods (*adhidaivatam*) as earth, atmosphere and sky becomes mind, breath and speech as regards the self (*adhyatmam*)—wind, fire, sun, the quarters and the moon corresponding respectively to breath, speech, eye, ear and mind. The parallelism of the macrocosm with the microcosm, of the cosmic order with the psychological functions of the man comes in for further elaboration, when the space within the heart is held to correspond to cosmic space, the breath of man to the wind, the speech to fire, the eye to the sun, the ear to the moon, the mind to the lightning. It is held that there are five cosmic spaces, five gods of nature, five classes of beings, and correspondingly we have five vital airs, five senses, five parts of the body. Finally, there is *Dharma*, law and truth for the world and for the man; and the cumulative force of all these evidences of parallelisms proves that 'the macrocosm and the microcosm are interrelated in an indissoluble union of reciprocal service and support.'<sup>14</sup> These suggestions of parallelism, although not presented in a strictly philosophical form, are nevertheless fraught with immense importance for later philosophic constructions. Viewed in their historical perspective, they may be said to contain the germ-plasm of Idealism and Realism in Indian thought with all their minute ramifications and notable variations. But in themselves they stand at the parting of ways, and are susceptible as much of a realistic, as of

an idealistic construction. From the standpoint of epistemology, the underlying assumption of all these parallelisms is, as was also in the case of Empedocles of old, that like is known by like (*similia similibus percipiuntur*). It would be perhaps more to the point to compare here Schopenhauer's 'anthroposophy' with its view of the world (*macranthropos*), according to which man as the union of will (which is the thing-in-itself) and body (which is only an objectification of the will) furnishes 'the key to the whole question of metaphysics.' Such is indeed the implication of the cryptic saying current among thinkers of the Vaishnava school that what is in this pot of the human body is to be found in the world abroad (*i. e.*, the primordial egg).

As already observed, the so-called 'polytheism' of the R̥gveda does not stand for an unmitigated pluralism, bereft of any redeeming grace either from the logical or the religious point of view. Properly speaking, it marks a phase of qualified pluralism in the gradual emergence of a growing sense of the One in the many. This first feature of Hindu theism is clearly evidenced by the concept of organic dependence in the way of major and minor (*angapratyanga bhavaḥ*) among the gods in their relation to one another—by the concepts, in particular, of reciprocal inherence (*anyonyasrayaḥ*) and reciprocal generation (*anyonyot-pattiḥ*). As against an anarchical regime of the gods implied in the term 'polytheism,' the inherent unifying tendency of the Vedic religion exhibits itself without detriment, however, to the individuality of the gods distributively, in the collective concept of *sarvadevata*, or the one more commonly used *visvedevah*. What such a concept clearly stipulates for is a federated community of gods, without the

12. अथाकारचिन्तनं देवतानाम् । पुरुषविद्याः  
सुरित्येकं चेतनावद्विस्तृतयो भवन्ति तथाभिधानानि  
—*Nirukta*.

13. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*, Vol. II.

suggestion either of an absolute or limited monarchy,—if at all, only a divine sovereignty in a state of shifting equilibrium. Perhaps it would not be going too far to infer, from the non-elision of the inflectional suffix in the collective term '*visvedevah*,' that full concession has been made for the respective rights of each god in the pantheon, just as in stressing the individuality of the component members of a collection or assembly, such as 'jury,' for example, the term is always used in the plural. To what extent this divine communism was influenced and moulded by the social environment of the people of that age, it is not easy to determine. The Vedic pantheon might have been, for aught we know, the replica of a particulate structure in ancient Indian polity, evolving from the association of free men as the basis of the corporate life in tribal assembly and village community and, through village government by such corporations as *sabhas* and *samitis*, exhibiting its typical character in centrifugal tendencies against the incidence of a Central State with sole sovereignty. (vide Dr. B. N. Seal's *syllabus*) It is, therefore, quite in the fitness of things that the priest should no longer appear in the role of the mediator, but only as the agent and representative of the *yajnika* or the congregation before the altar united in mind and purpose. Nowhere does it come out so pointedly as in the high-pitched strain of unison on which the *Rigveda* closes—"United be your intentions, united (the wishes) of your hearts, united be your thoughts, so that there may be thorough union among you." <sup>14</sup> It would be carrying a philosophical interpretation to its

breaking-point in trying, as some have done, to elicit from the suggested view of unity of purpose between different minds, the metaphysical creed of Advaitism with its doctrine of an existential oneness of souls.

It is necessary to consider certain accessory phenomena contributory towards the emergence of the next higher stage, namely, of monotheism. At the very outset one can not help commenting on the doubtful wisdom of coining the term 'henotheism' to designate a stage in the evolution of the religious consciousness of the race—a stage which is over in a state of unstable equilibrium, and justifies itself only by a perpetual self-transcendence. The mental state that is supposed to have originated it clearly belies the clear-cut neatness and definiteness that such a coinage of a new term is suggestive of. It is pre-eminently a case of arrested development, the accompanying mental state of the worshipper having only a transitive and not a substantive reality. While admitting that Henotheism, as 'an unconscious groping towards monotheism' seems to be the result of the logic of religion, Prof. Radhakrishnan rightly observes that 'the whole position is a logical contradiction, where the heart showed the right path of progress and belief contradicted it.' <sup>15</sup> Indeed, such a rotatory monotheism satisfies neither the requirements of logical rigour nor of religious integrity. Accordingly, there seems to be no exaggeration about Bloomfield's description of it as 'polytheism grown cold in service, and un-nice in its distinctions, leading to an opportunist monotheism, in which every god takes hold of the sceptre and none keeps it.' <sup>16</sup>

१४ समानी व आकूतिः समाना हृदयानि वः ।  
समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वः सुसहसति ।

15. Indian Philosophy, Vol. I. p. 9.

16. *The Religion of the Veda*. p. 199.

(To be continued)

# THE NATURE OF PHILOSOPHIC ENDEAVOUR

By C. V. Srinivasa Murthy, M. A.

## *Introductory*

**P**HILOSOPHY which once enjoyed great prestige as the 'queen of the sciences' has fallen into discredit in recent years. Philosophy, we are told, has become abstract, barren and fruitless. The immense advance in science and scientific inventions, and the purely intellectualistic method employed by philosophers have been not a little responsible for the overthrow of philosophy from its original post of honour. The rescue of philosophy from its present plight consists in an endeavour to take into account the facts disclosed by science and to offer a solid foundation for human life. Such an achievement is impossible unless we examine the nature of our task and the adequacy of our instrument. In this essay I propose to consider the nature of philosophic endeavour and the equipment necessary for successful philosophizing. We may describe the nature of philosophizing by way of pointing out its relation to science.

## II

### *Philosophy and Science*

Philosophy does not consist of a definite set of thoughts expressed in conceptual formulae. We cannot even speak of philosophy but only of philosophizing. What the philosophers have is an experience, an understanding of it, and an attitude of mind. Science on the other hand, is an organised or systematised body of knowledge. It is precise, exact, and quantitative. While science deals only with a certain

department of the universe, philosophy has the whole universe for its subject matter. While science starts with certain assumptions, philosophy critically examines those assumptions. It is one of the virtues of philosophy that it takes nothing for granted. Everything must be tested by logic and life before it can be accepted as true. Though philosophy is not science it is scientific in its attitude in so far as it attempts to view things with freedom from prepossessions and prejudices. But the scope and function of the two are different. The interest of science is mainly cognitive; that of philosophy is the whole of experience, the cognitive, the emotional and the volitional, as well as the conditions that make possible such experiences. When either science or philosophy mistakes its vocation it goes astray. When physical science pronounces the judgment that the whole world is material it goes beyond itself and so is led into error. When philosophy asserts that the whole universe can be completely explained merely in terms of mind, it makes the same mistake. Philosophy must evolve a method which does justice to all facts of life and views things in right proportion. Let us pass in review the leading methods of philosophic enquiry.

## III

### *The Past Philosophic Methods*

Descartes was the first among the moderns, who, inspired by the mathematical spirit of the age, sought to rest all philosophical conclusions on as clear

and distinct' foundations as those of mathematical truths. He insisted on application of the mathematical method to philosophy in drawing out deductively fresh conclusions from self-evident principles. But he gave a wrong lead to philosophic thought in his expression of the unbounded confidence in the ability of reason to reveal the whole universe. The exclusion of sense-experience from his theory of knowledge is at the basis of all evil in modern philosophy. The reduction *ad absurdum* of a purely rationalistic method is reached in the philosophy of Wolf, John Locke, the founder of British empiricism, sought to find an explanation of the whole universe on the basis of pure sense-experience to the exclusion of reason and the impossibility of such an one-sided method is clearly seen in the scepticism of David Hume. The sceptical conclusions were so clearly and unequivocally expressed by Hume that they 'awoke Kant from his dogmatic slumber' and thus gave rise to a system of philosophy which was bound to influence all subsequent speculation. Even Kant's critical method is not critical enough. While recognising the claims of reason and sense it failed to achieve a proper coordination of the two with the result a false theory of knowledge and a dualistic metaphysics came into being. Starting from a discord between reason and sense Kant could not harmonise the two. Hegel cuts at the root of the dualism of the phenomenal and the noumenal worlds by employing the famous dialectic method. He examines one category after another with a view to discovering a concept which is self-consistent, which does not contradict itself. He arrives at the category of the absolute, a category which does not contradict itself but explains the whole of experi-

ence. The phenomenal and the noumenal worlds are not separate and independent but are the expressions of a single spirit. The same method is employed in the great work of F. H. Bradley, 'Appearance and Reality'. But the dialectic method appears to be purely intellectualistic in character. The whole thing appears to be 'an unearthly ballet of bloodless categories.'

#### IV

##### *Contemporary Methods: Bergson and William James*

The intuitive method of Bergson and the pragmatic method of William James enter a very strong protest against the purely intellectualistic method. We must admit that these act as healthy correctives. The pragmatic method insisting on 'utility' as the standard has led to a very narrow world—the industrial world and nothing more. The pragmatic method has failed to give a sufficiently permanent and comprehensive speculative foundation for the rapidly developing industrial America. It is this want that is very keenly felt by John Dewey in his address to the International Philosophical Congress of 1926 on 'Philosophy and Civilisation' when he complains of the "lack of imagination in generating leading ideas." The method of intuition propounded by Bergson strikes a truer note. We must not be satisfied with merely knowing about the object, looking around it, but must have an insight into the inner nature of things. We must instal ourselves into the movement, be one with the life process in order to have a grip on fact.

##### *The Indian Point of View*

Though we commend Bergson's method of intuition we cannot be one with it. By our survey of the western methods of philosophizing we have seen

that they are more concerned with the mind than with the heart. The western conception of the universe is very limited. The idea of a large spiritual experience to be lived out 'here and now' is foreign to it. The Indian philosopher protests against the attempt at making philosophy merely "a thinking consideration of things." Philosophy is not the discovery of an abstract concept. It is not an empty vision. It is a concrete vision—a vision which inspires and is inspired by life and conduct. It is not something to be got by studying books, but something to be acquired by passing through an experience. It is something to be lived and realised. No theory, however original, can be of significance if it is contentless. Hence a certain environment, a certain disciplining of life is essential to one who is intent on philosophizing, desirous of discovering a solid basis of human life, founded on a world-view which is logically coherent and emotionally satisfying. One cannot speak of an universe which one has not realised in one's own experience. It is this attitude that is characteristic of the Indian method of philosophizing. In India nobody has a right to philosophize unless he qualifies himself for such a task. A certain duty is enjoined on him, failing to perform which incapacitates him from pursuing the quest of reality; the successful performance of the same announces his fitness for it. The duty that is demanded by a philosophic life is marked by a largeness of experience and breadth of outlook. We may briefly describe the preparation necessary to acquire the right to philosophize.

#### *Adhikara (Fitness for Philosophizing)*

The most outstanding of the Indian systems of metaphysics is Vedanta and the qualifications required of a Vedantic student are described by Sankara. The

description is marked by a brilliant psychological analysis of a soul marching steadily towards the realisation of the universal life. The method aims not merely at moral discipline but intellectual conviction as well. The acquisition of the following four qualities makes one a fit disciple of the Goddess of Wisdom.

1. "Discrimination between things eternal and non-eternal." This statement must be interpreted with caution. It should not be understood to mean that 'discriminative knowledge' should be possessed whole and entire by a student who is still on the threshold of philosophic life. It only means that the student must have the power of thought to know that there are things of intrinsic value as distinguished from those of instrumental value and that the former alone ought to be steadily realised. What is required is only a certain capacity and a certain tendency which actualise themselves as life proceeds.

2. "Renunciation of the enjoyment of the rewards here and in the other world." An action must be done, a rule must be followed, not because it brings reward of some kind or other but because it aids in the realisation of the Goal of existence. If the student of philosophy concerns himself with relative goods and temporary satisfaction he loses the wood for the trees. Nothing in the empirical world can give final satisfaction. A certain detachment is essential to concentrate one's whole self on the ideal to be realised.

3. "The possession of a group of six qualities." The first two of these *Sama* and *Dama* respectively represent the control of the mind and of the senses. *Uparati* denotes abstention from things which lack philosophic interest; *Titiksha* means the possession of fortitude and courage to 'bear the pairs of opposites

like heat and cold,' pain and pleasure. *Samadhana* is the power of concentration on the ideal to be realised. *Sraddha* is faith in the ideal. "It is respect for truth, which means readiness to work for its achievement and is a great help in securing stability of effort. It is a form of reverence and need not necessarily be opposed to reason. It only excludes vacillation of mind that leads to constant shifting of ideals."

4. "The desire for self-realisation." The possession of other qualities is useless without an intense desire for self-realisation. It is this desire that acts as an effective spur to effort and activity.

#### *Conclusion*

The acquisition of the qualities so far described fits one for the task of philosophizing. In insisting on the preparation for philosophic life we are simply following the example set by science. Nobody can be a scientist unless he cultivates the spirit of impartial judgment and trains his powers of observation and interpretation. The scientist

creates for himself the factors of his observation. So also the philosopher must equip himself by means of an efficient system of training, a system which enables him to live a dedicated life, which leads him to create an experience in which the contradictions of life find a fruitful source of explanation. The success in philosophic explanation depends very greatly on facts supplied by the richest experience possible, just as the success of scientific explanation depends on the exactness and precision of the facts supplied by experiments. If our philosophic endeavour is to be successful, we must bring to bear the western intellectualistic method to work on the experience which is as intense as it is comprehensive, an experience which is supplied by a disciplined life. The western methods have failed for want of a rich experience. The west has the 'form' and not the 'matter.' To use Hegel's statement in another context "the owl of Minerva does not start on her flight until the shades of night begin to fall."

## HINDI OR URDU AS NATIONAL LANGUAGE

*By Prof. P. M. Bhambhani, M. A.*

**I**NDIA'S great men have cogitated and concluded that Hindusthan should have Hindi for her common language. And inasmuch as language is a medium for the expression of the feelings and thoughts of the human mind, they are certainly right in thinking that one language will help in making India one. Language is certainly not the only way to that end, but that it is one of the most direct ways to it, there can be no doubt. Now this being the importance of having one language for all-India, the question is whether the mere popu-

larisation in all the provinces of the kind of Hindi we already have is enough, or we should also effect some change in the quality of the current coin. This is a very important question and deserves to be solved, so that its solution may be materialised as soon as possible.

As it is, we find that the Hindi language is being highly Sanskritised. And the provincial Hindi apart, this is being done even when the thought it embodies is intended to soak into the entire body of the country. The result

is that when a layman to Sanskrit reads it, he notices that the language is hardly anything short of pure Sanskrit and feels that to spare us the untruth of adopting a false name we had rather call it Sanskrit, except for a small reservation. Now this practice may satisfy the thirst for scholarship and learning, but cannot meet the demand for making a universal language for the whole of the country. There are four regular provinces in India in which Hindi is not understood except in a very meagre way. These are Sind, Gujarat, Madras and Bengal. And even in one of the remaining provinces, namely, the Punjab, the masses who are exclusively Punjabi-speaking people do not understand either Hindi or Urdu, except a smattering of it, that may be necessary for some such very ordinary things as shopping. And even among Sindis and Gujaratis who do really understand something of Hindi, they do nothing short of murdering the language both in pronunciation and composition although they may partly succeed in conveying their thoughts to others. Madrasis know it still less so much so that an advice is often given that in Madras a stranger should talk in English rather than in Hindi even to the shopkeepers and gariwallas of that place. My Bengali friends tell me that it is generally not understood in Bengal, and that it is only Bengalis living in other parts of India who can understand and talk something of it, although even some of these are unable to speak it correctly and freely except, of course, those who by their long residence in the U. P. are naturalised to Hindi. And, to be fair, the same is really the case with the men of Sind, Gujarat and Madras, excepting those who have a particular aptitude for it or have studied it in the U. P. during the period

of their education. Poor Language, it does not cry while it is killed, its only refuge being the ears that hear it killed. For these burst out not only with a heart of pity but often with a sound of remonstrance and defence.

Again in U.P., about half its educated population among Hindus are Urdu-knowing and adopt Urdu for their spoken and written vernacular; and from among the other half, the strictly technical or literary Hindi is only understood by a few, the rest using a mixture of the language. The uneducated or illiterate are as a rule villagers, and they do not understand the Hindi of the educated, their vernacular being the rustic or the villager's language. This rustic language, in its turn, is not one but many, because different dialects are spoken in different villages which are scattered over the province. The strictly present-day Hindi is only understood by a portion of the educated men of the province, who for this reason form a new caste based on their knowledge of a separate sort of language from that of a large portion of the masses who understand almost nothing of it, this being a case similar to that in the Punjab where the Urdu of the educated is not understood by the generality of the masses whose only medium of expression is the Punjabi. It is a pity indeed that the old orthodox Hindi,—one form of which called the *Brajbhasha* is really very eloquent and elegant and in which is written that great book, the *Ramayan* of Tulsidas, that even today sways the minds of India's millions of far and near—is, in turn, not understood by a good many educated men of the United Provinces.

Then, again, take the case of Mahomedans, Parsis and Europeans living in India. Everyone knows that not one per cent. of Mahomedans understand

Hindi, even including those who are residents of U.P., their language being Urdu with a separate script. The same is the case with the Parsis whose vernacular is Gujarati. As to Europeans who can speak Hindi, it is no use saying anything, as every one knows what kind of Indian vernaculars they speak. And the fact that there are exceptions to the rule does not affect the case in point here.

This general state of things is therefore a plea that the Hindi of today, which is considerably alloyed with Sanskrit and which for this reason is called literary Hindi and is being copied even by the vernacular newspapers and magazines in spite of the fact that they wish to influence the Indian popular mind, should be simplified, if it is to be an all-India language. For its orthodox, *i.e.*, its Sanskritised form is not understood alike by Europeans, Parsis, Mahommedans and a large portion of Hindus in India. The other day a Hindu friend complained to the present writer of the Sanskritised Hindi thus: "I am a man who can read both Hindi and Urdu and speak it just to make my thoughts fairly understood, of course with some difficulty regarding its vocabulary, as I am unable to recall appropriate words for a fairly correct expression of thought, although in understanding written or spoken Hindi I do not as a rule feel such a difficulty. To my surprise, therefore, I found the other day that in my own article translated and published in Hindi I found a large number of difficult Sanskrit words. I wondered if the article was really mine, before I compared it with the original word for word, and even then the feeling of warmth and intimacy with which I could call my own as mine was sadly absent. On the other hand, in the same paper there were some other articles

which I could easily understand, since they were worded in easy colloquial Hindi mixed in many places with Urdu words; and they formed such an easy reading that I thought that even a Mahommedan could understand them. This new quality of Hindi which is so easy to follow has already been popularly styled as Hindustani and I wish that in the interest of creating an all-India language it were 'adopted by all Hindi newspapers and magazines.' I agreed with him; and, indeed, if Hindi is to be made into a language of the whole of our great country, it must be made easy enough to be understood by all who are familiar with it in some form or other; and in case it be necessary to know what particular characteristics will make it the kind of simple Hindi we want it to become, namely, Hindustani as our country's well wishers have already named it, it is certainly worth our while to put our heads together and come to a definite conclusion without loss of time.

The same must be said of Urdu. The highly Persianised Urdu ought to come down from its Himalayan heights to peaks which stand lower down the slope where the common run of humanity reside, *i.e.*, men who do not possess an advanced knowledge of the language. Is it not a fact that even among Mahommedans there are lacs of men who do not understand Urdu at all or only understand a smattering of it, the smattering being certainly far from that Persianised, literary or, what is called, scholarly Urdu? Every one knows that even in U. P., and the Punjab where the use of Urdu among the Mahommedans may be expected to be the largest, there are thousands of Mahommedans among the working classes who talk the villagers' language which is certainly common between Mahommedans and Hindus. This is

especially so in the Punjab where the Punjabi is spoken by all its inhabitants regardless of the difference of religion, i. e., by Hindus, Mahommedans and Sikhs alike, and where the masses and the working classes hardly understand any Urdu or, for the matter of that, any language but the Punjabi. Should the editors of Hindi and Urdu magazines desire—and of all other people who are dubbed as benefactors of our country editors, certainly, are the most expected to desire—that the thought embodied by their magazines should vibrate through the length and breadth of the country, it is important that they bring the language of their papers to a level which the less knowing brethren of our country may understand with ease; and these our less knowing brethren are scattered all over the world of Hind, not excluding the provinces where the knowledge of Hindi or Urdu is the most expected from its residents.

One disadvantage of this proposal must be acknowledged, namely, that the high class vernacular must be brought down to a low level to suit the ordinary reading of laymen in the language; that if the proposal materialises, the scholarship and learning in the language will perhaps be discouraged and partly sacrificed. This seems to be a real difficulty but is not altogether without a solution. It is that we should have two classes of the vernacular literature: (1) Magazines or Newspapers and (2) Books. The latter may try to soar aloft and rise in the scale of literary learning, so that they may provide food for scholars and a field for the display of their talent and scholarship. This will conserve the quality of literature we have produced so far, and keep the way for further progress open. The former, on the other hand, may try to reach the level of the common mass of

men by making the language of their papers as easy as they can follow. They form an easy and unfailing means of disseminating the country's daily thought among mankind, and, indeed, the greater the number of men who can receive and appreciate this thought the better. As the more is the merrier in other things, so it is in this.

The editors, moreover, have two other ends in view: (1) from the standpoint of business, they want as wide a circulation of their papers as possible, and this proposal, if accepted, serves this end as well, while it fulfils the higher purpose of the communication of thought as widely as possible; (2) as benefactors of the country they should want to bridge the gulf between the two languages—Hindi and Urdu—so that it is necessary that their articles in Hindi and Urdu magazines should really be couched in so easy a language that each party may understand the other's magazines. It must be however acknowledged that while a large number of Hindus in U. P. and the Punjab understand Urdu, it is a fact that a large majority of Mahommedans do not understand Hindi. It is only when the Hindi-reading public and Urdu-reading public find interest in each other's language and literature that a war between the two languages will cease.

Then, again, there is the question of the languages being acceptable to the men of other provinces where they are not much understood. For it is only when Hindustani becomes interesting to provinces outside its own that it can hope to become a language for all-India. Sanskritised Hindi cannot hope to become a language for entire India, when it is not understood by all even in U. P., at least not until Sanskrit becomes once more a living language in India. Nor for the same reason can

Urdu aspire to the same aim, until Persian is understood all over the country. To this pedestal, therefore, can only rise what we have called Hindustani, i. e., a language formed by a mixture of easy vocabulary from both the languages.

It is of course natural that the magazines and newspapers in question fight shy of lowering the standard of their language by making it more popular than scholarly. "Should we not", they would say, "care more for scholarship and publish masterful articles which men learned in the language may find pleasure to read?" The answer is that they should not. It is one thing to be natural or act in a natural manner, and another to be consistent with one's end or aim. Their purpose is not the advancement of language, but the popularisation of the Indian vernacular and through it the dissemination of the national thought which is current among the well-wishers of the country and humanity; and inasmuch as the Persianised Urdu and Sanskritised Hindi cannot be understood by a large majority of our countrymen, this Indian vernacular must become Hindustani, at least in newspapers and magazines. If therefore by 'scholarly' they mean a highly Persianised or Sanskritised language, they cannot consistently make the publication of scholarly articles their practice. They may however just to feed their literary taste publish a small percentage of their articles from the pen of masters in the language. But what exactly should be the proportion of such literary masterpieces to the rest of the paper is a question to which an answer must depend on the size of the paper as also on the fidelity of its organisers to the main purpose in view, namely, the one which has been stated above.

This argument cannot apply to magazines in other vernaculars in the country, namely, Marathi, the Madras languages, Bengali, Gujarati or Sindi. For these are only intended to serve their own provinces and not to be circulated and popularised among men of other provinces. In the matter of linguistic learning, therefore, they may rise as high as possible and their writers may be among the very best of the country's scholars and yet they will have a fair chance of being understood by the men of their provinces: and the portions employing more difficult words in the expression of deeper thought will only encourage a deeper study of the language. But place before a man a very difficult article in a foreign language which he does not know, and in most cases he only throws it away instead of trying to read it. It will bear iteration to say that the vernacular magazines of the United Provinces and the Punjab have a different purpose, namely, to make Hindustani the all-India language. Hence the proposal of this paper. Were Hindi or Urdu a provincial language only, and had it no aspiration, i. e., did its work lie with one province only, and had it no aspiration to sway the mind of the entire country, it would be free to pursue its course as high as within its own limits it can. As it is, the sacrifice suggested here is only a price for the achievement of the great object of the unity of the Indian people through the unity of language.

Is this sacrifice a permanent one? The answer is, No. For such a climb down from a height and maintaining a lower level will not, in any sense, be more than a temporary one. For if only we could work persistently, a decade or two of earnest labour will perhaps bring us in sight of the goal of surcharging the country with a fair

knowledge of Hindustani; and once this object is achieved, both Hindi and Urdu may do as other provincial languages do at present. There will then be three languages : Hindustani, Hindi and Urdu, for Hindi and Urdu having married will then have produced Hindustani, the child of their union. At present they have to work under limitations, but when the end is attained, their fetters will exist no more and they will be free to soar as aloft as they may. They will moreover have the additional satisfaction of having produced a child which will have an advantage over the other provincial languages in the fact that while the latter will yet be provincial languages, the former will have become a language for the entire country. What we have at first to do is to make Hindustani a language for the people of the whole country ; and when this has been done we may do what we like, to answer to the needs of the higher level which is certainly the level demanded by the provincial classes for which the two languages primarily exist.

This is also being done for the English language which aspires to become the world language. A large number of magazines are being issued just with a view to popularise the language ; and there are also especial journals which are written in language easy enough for the less read, although it is true at the same time that the higher level of the language is also kept up by issuing other magazines and books. But the English language has one other advantage, namely that English schools are opened almost all over the world and the teaching of the language is also proceeding equally apace. This is exactly what we should do in the case of Hindustani as well, and then the difficulty felt in bringing down the level of the present day language will

gradually become less and less and its limitation less and less rigorous. But inasmuch as Hindi (or Urdu), which is at present only a provincial language, aspires to be an all-India language, the sacrifice is worth making. Gradually, as we find our ideal slowly but surely coming nearer and nearer, we might even start a few magazines especially dedicated to this purpose and so having Hindustani for their medium of expression. But short of this sacrifice there seems to be no royal road to the attainment of this end.

The existence of a single all-India language has the advantage of socially uniting India, as that of many languages divides it. It is a pity that there are proposals to open Universities in India on the basis of its linguistic differences between provinces. Little do the proposers think that the free intercourse which is now possible between the educated men of different provinces will exist no more. At present there are hundreds of people who are, for the sake of work, scattered over different provinces to which they do not originally belong. A common language helps us to learn others' manners, increases our experience, broadens our outlook and, what is more, leads to the mixing up of manners. And by thus creating common sympathies, it makes us men of one feeling and forms a considerable factor in goading us on to the goal of a common brotherhood of men. Our aim must be to eliminate the provincial feeling that we call Bengali-non-Bengali feeling, Madras non-Madras feeling, Punjabi-non-Punjabi feeling, Sindi-non-Sindi feeling, Gujarati-non-Gujarati feeling etc., and one very important method for achieving this is to have a common language. I confess that language is not the only means of attaining to this sort of democracy of feeling ; and that a hundred other things must

be done before the goal could be expected to be clearly in sight. But as far as it is the function of language to help in the attainment of this aim by bringing hearts together, the goal will certainly be more in sight when oneness in language is attained.

There is a tide in the affairs of nations, as in the affairs of men, and its rise and ebb are controlled and guided by a star of their destiny. And one of the rays in this star is the existence of a common language. And this achieved, much will have been achieved.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE MYSTERIOUS KUNDALINI:** 3rd Edition, Revised and Enlarged; by Vasant G. Relu. Published by D. P. Taraporevala Sons & Co., "Kitab Mahal", Hornby Road, Bombay—Price Rs. 3-8-0.

This book was the result of an attempt to give a satisfactory explanation of the various wonderful feats, such as the stopping of the heart-beat at will, performed by one Deshabandhu before the Bombay Medical Union in 1926. The author has here utilised the subject matter of such books on Yoga, as Hatha Yoga Pradipika and Shat Chakra Nirupana, and tried to harmonise it with the conclusions of western anatomy and physiology. He has ably shown that "the anatomy of the nerves given in the Tantrik manuals can stand comparison with our present knowledge" and that "Yoga is the science which raises the capacity of the human mind to respond to higher vibrations and to perceive, catch and assimilate the infinite conscious movements going on around us in the universe". In his own characteristic way he says that it "makes one a broadcasting as well as a receiving station of radio-activity with the mind as the aerial". Regarding the conclusion that Kundalini is the Right Vagus Nerve, there has been difference of opinion, Sir John Woodroffe, for instance, writing in the Preface that Kundalini is a "Power" and as such cannot be a nerve, or any other substance or mental faculty. It seems to us, however, from the main drift of the author's thesis that his "nerve" means not merely the inert substance of the nerve but the conscious "Power" which travels along it, using it as its channel

of expression. The value of the book, at any rate, lies not simply in the explanation that it has offered but also in the example it has shown of a bold, laborious and scientifically conducted research into the various processes and possibilities of Yoga. The present edition is a considerable improvement in every way upon the previous ones.

**THE KARNATAK HISTORICAL REVIEW:** Published by the Karnatak Historical Research Society, Dharwar.

The objects of the Society are, among other things, to promote historical research and to organise a research library and museum in the Karnatak. We welcome the Review which is the Society's organ for communicating to the public from time to time the valuable results of its long-continued labours.

**THE ORIENT:** Edited by Mr. H. D. Sekhna, M.A., 5 Military Square, Fort, Bombay. Annual Subscription Rs. 4.

This is a Bi-monthly Journal dealing with a variety of topics such as the general culture of the East and the West, politics, philosophy, economics, psychology and art in its different branches. A high standard is maintained throughout. The printing and get up are excellent. We are sure that the annual subscription of Rs. 4 will not be considered too high by any one.

**RAJA YOGA OR OCCULTISM:** By H. P. Blavatsky: Published by the Theosophical Co. (India), Ltd., Bombay. Pages 132. Price Rs. 1.

Those who have been accustomed to think that Raja Yoga means an explanation of the Yoga Sutras of Patan-

jail, or at least expect it to give them some "practical instructions" regarding meditation or psychic control, are sure to be disappointed after going through this book. For this volume merely contains a series of articles from the pen of Madam Blavatsky setting forth a few of the principles of Theosophy. Neither are these seeing the light of day for the first time, for they have all appeared in some month or other in the columns of the *Lucifer*, *The Path* or the *Theosophist*. Some sections are devoted to the discussion of "Elementals", "Astral Bodies", "After-life" and "Hypnotism", and are presented mostly in the form of dialogues. While these topics may be of interest only to a particular type of people, the chapter answering why "the signs and wonders with which Neo-Theosophy was ushered in" are no more forthcoming, and whether the "age of miracles" is over once for all for the Society, will be found suggestive by all classes of readers. Phenomena, we are told by way of reply, were presented only as instances of a power over perfectly natural, though unrecognised, forces which are latent in all men, and can be certainly developed and wielded by the sincere aspirant. It has been found by experience—and that discovery was made by the pioneers of Theosophy too—that the attempt to arouse higher aspirations by holding forth the attainment of "superior powers" as a bait was almost always fraught with evil consequences. By such attempts the goal of the self-culture or *Sadhana*, chalked out not only by Theosophy but by the different organised religions as well, will surely be misunderstood, and a most vicious tendency will be created in the aspirant to test every now and then how far he has progressed in the "art" of controlling "others" and manifesting psychic phenomena. To avoid this evil, the author has taken pains to show that "true occultism is the great renunciation of self, unconditionally and absolutely in thought and action". All those who are "susceptible to the blandishments of the short and easy path" and fall a prey to the "quick results promised" will do well to read this book carefully, and to imbibe the

spirit underlying the Preface and the chapter on *Chelas*.

**AWAKENING:** *By Yogacharyya Sree-mat Abadhuta Jnanananda Deva: Published by D. P. Shrivastava, Sri Advaita Press, 10, Shyama Charan De St., Calcutta. Pages 202. Price Rs. 1-12.*

This is the translation of the Bengali work "Chaitanya Ba Sarva Dharma Nirnaya Sara" of the Avadhuta Jnanananda Swami, also known as Sree Nityagopala Deva. The translation was done by Sree Nityaswarupananda Avadhuta, who however did not live long enough to revise it and put it through the press. This book breathes an air of purity and simplicity from beginning to end. The topics dealt with cover a vast range and have been arranged in six parts. Maya, Faith and Reliance, The Caste System and Its Corruption, Asceticism and Renunciation are some of the many chapters which will be found very suggestive. The main aim of the book is a synthesis and the alternative title given on the cover is "The essence of the Determination of the Universal Religion." There is yet no systematic discussion, properly speaking, neither any sustained argument, as we are ordinarily familiar with. The subjects are merely presented from a few scattered stand-points, every remark being, of course, illustrated by some example from ordinary life or from scripture. The total effect nevertheless is quite refreshing and if one pieces together the remarks one gets a satisfaction not in any way inferior to that which a continuous and learned argument can give. This book we commend to all who look, not for scholarship but for real suggestivity, in works on spiritual culture.

**THE HEART OF BHAGAVATAM:** *By Mr. Susarla Srinivasa Rao, B.A., Retd. Dy. Collector, Ramraopet, Cocanada, Published by the Sri Vyasa Press, Tirupati. Pages 179. Price Re. 1.*

The Mahabharata of Vyasa, we read, ran the risk of being considered by some people to be mainly an exposition of the duties of man in relation to the world. Another treatise was therefore found necessary to teach clearly and in

unmistakable terms his duties towards the Supreme Being. It was thus that the famous Bhagavata had its origin. But because of the very magnitude of the work and its commentaries, and also because of the interspersions of numerous stories and poetical descriptions, it became impossible for ordinary readers of later days to grasp the central idea, *viz.*, contemplation of and surrender to "the Lotus Feet of the Lord". For the benefit of such persons Sri Jayatirtha Swamin known as Vishnubirtha selected 365 verses, calculating one verse for each day of the year, from the entire Bhagavata, and wrote a commentary of his own on them. These with the addition of two verses of introduction and valediction, are arranged into 30 chapters each

dealing with a separate topic, as for example, the qualifications of a Mumukshu, the importance of association with the great or the worship of the gross and subtle forms of the Supreme Being. These verses were translated into Telugu in 1928, and as the book was favourably received by the public the idea arose to bring out an English translation for the benefit of those who knew neither Sanskrit nor Telugu. The verses (with the number of Skandha, Chapter, etc., noted against them) are printed in Sanskrit characters, and below are given the translation and such notes as are required to connect the ideas. We are sure that this book will help to make most readers desire to know more of the original work of Vyasa.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### TRIUMPH OF "SOUL FORCE"

Through the Grace of the Lord and the loving co-operation of the leaders, the supreme penance of Mahatma Gandhi has triumphed at last. For an understanding has been arrived at between the "Separate Electorate" section of the Depressed classes and the rest of Hindu India. His immediate objective, namely the maintenance of Hindu solidarity "at any cost" being thus achieved, Mahatma Gandhi feels satisfied that the letter of his vow has been fulfilled, and has accordingly broken his self-imposed fast. The leader's safety thus ensured, people can certainly afford now to speculate whether the Depressed classes as a whole have not been able on account of this fast to bargain more efficiently, and to wrest privileges far in excess of what the Government, as their champion, had decided to lay down in their Award, or what the so-called higher castes would under normal circumstances have cared to concede. Further, considering the Mahatma's threat that he might be compelled to give notice of a second fast, some might also, in all sincerity, start philosophising on the propriety of self-immolation for forcing

reforms, however good, down the throat of an unprepared society. We, for our part, are simply overpowered by this tremendous manifestation of "Soul Force". That a single individual, sincere to the core, and disciplining himself into perfect tune with the rest of humanity, can by his prayerful eagerness rouse up sympathetic responses in the hearts of millions less disciplined, and break through their walls of orthodoxy and superstition, has now been amply demonstrated. Let us, therefore, instead of frittering away our energies by vain scrutinies and speculations, take the fullest advantage of this rather rude "half-awakening" the Mahatma has given us, and proceed without delay to do effective constructive work for the welfare of those who have hitherto been despised and denied human rights. Let iniquities be no more perpetrated, knowingly or unknowingly, in the name of Hinduism whose scriptures, more than those of any other religion, voice forth in the clearest terms that every human soul is divine. Let the all embracing love, devotion and spirit of self-sacrifice of the Mahatma enter the hearts of all of us!



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XIX]

NOVEMBER, 1932

[No. 7

## HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्यं रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।  
तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ ॥  
काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ।  
माहाशनो माहापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥  
धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथाऽऽदर्शो मलेन च ।  
यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥  
आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणः ।  
कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥

Attachment and aversion of the senses for their respective objects are natural ; let none come under their sway ; they are the foes of the seeker after Truth.

It is desire—it is anger, born of Rajoguna, of great craving ; and of great sin. Know this to be man's foe in this world.

As fire is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dust, as an embryo by the secundine, so is knowledge covered by desire.

O son of Kuntī, knowledge is covered by this, the unappeasable fire of desire—the constant foe of the wise.

BHAGAVAD GITA, CHAP. III.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

*(Continued from Page 204)*

### *The Same Grace of the Master upon Lady Devotees*

**T**HE lady devotee continued, "The following day we again went to Dakshineswar. The moment we appeared before him he came near us and said, "I ate up nearly the whole of the cream brought by you. Very little was left. I have got no illness. Only the bowels have been irritated a bit." I was astonished to hear it. Nothing suits his stomach and yet he has taken such a large quantity of cream! Then we came to know that being in a divine mood he did so. We were told that the Master, after taking food at Master Mahasaya's house, came to Dakshineswar at 10-30 P.M. Shortly after his arrival he was in a state of divine inspiration, and in a half conscious mood told Ramlal Dada, "I feel very hungry. Give me anything that is in the house." At this Ramlal Dada brought the cream given by us and placed it before him. The Master took the whole of it! We now recollected those stories which we had heard from the Holy Mother and Lakshmi Didi about his taking too much of food every now and then while in an ecstatic state of mind and digesting it all without trouble. How much of grace did we obtain from him! The

extent of his compassion cannot be made intelligible by words! We ourselves do not understand how and why we were attracted towards him and could behave with him in that way then. But at present, strangely enough, we cannot go on foot in the same way to an unknown gentleman's house, without previous intimation, for the purpose of seeing a Sadhu or listening to religious discourses. The power, which used to embolden us to do so, vanished with him! Losing him, why we yet retain life we are at a loss to understand."

In this way many more illustrations can be cited. Those who never stirred out of their houses were made by him to buy provisions from the market and beg from door to door like ordinary beggars in order that they might shake off their pride or egoism. He sometimes took them along with him to visit the public celebration at Peneti and such other functions. They too out of immense joy carried out the orders of the Master without the least hesitation. A little reflection would show that this was a matter of no mean significance. All their doubts and misgivings, arising from the perception of differences, were for the time being swept away by the surge of a mighty wave of

knowledge. All considered themselves blessed to find the perfect ideal of their own spiritual thoughts in the person of the Master, a shining concretised embodiment of spiritual moods as he was. Men bowed down their heads finding the perfect development of manliness in him. And on observing the manifestation of all womanly characteristics in him, women too, in their turn unhesitatingly accepted him as the nearest of the near.

*Imitation of Womanly Manners  
by the Master*

At times the Master used to imitate womanly manners in our presence. We would be surprised to observe so much of exactitude in this action of his. With reference to this matter a lady devotee once told us that one day the Master began to demonstrate before them the gestures and postures of women at the time of catching sight of any man. "Their way of pulling the cloth over the head, drawing the hair away by the ear-side, their way of covering the breast, of conversing with various physical movements—all these as depicted by him were exact in every detail! At this we began to laugh. But at heart we were ashamed and felt sorry to think that the Master was thus holding up to ridicule all women. We thought, 'Why, are all women of this nature?' After all we were none other than women and if anybody criticises women in that way we shall quite naturally get offended. At once the Master

came to know what was passing in our mind and began to say, 'Well, I am not referring to yourselves. You are not the embodiments of evil powers. Only those in whom such powers predominate act as I have shown.' "

*Blending together of Both the Manly  
and Womanly Sentiments in the  
Personality of the Master*

Every devotee of the Master realised to some extent a harmonious mingling of both male and female characteristics in him. Realising thus, Sjt. Girish said to the Master one day, "Well, sir, are you Purusha, or Prakriti?" With a smile the Master told in reply, "I do not know." Who will now decide whether he spoke thus in the light of the men of self-realisation who declare, 'We are neither men nor women,' or because he observed in himself the balanced development of the feelings of both sexes?

*The Master being ever in Bhava  
Mukha could grasp the Thoughts of  
All*

Being absorbed in Bhava Mukha the Master, who was an embodiment of all sentiments, could thus rightly understand the inner thoughts of everybody and act as a woman before women and as a man before men. He personally enlightened some of us on this point. One lady devotee\* of a supremely devotional bent of mind told us that the Master was one day speaking thus to her: "Looking at

\* The Mother of Swami Premanandaji.

people I can know of what mettle they are. Who is good and who is bad, who is lawfully begotten and who is otherwise, who is a Jnani and who is a Bhakta, who can become religious and who cannot—all these I can know, but I do not speak out as they will be grievously hurt in mind." Because he would remain in Bhava Mukha, the whole world would always appear before him as being a concretised form of thoughts alone. It would seem as if men and women, cows and horses, wood and earth, were all rising up and floating as so many bubbles of ideas in the cosmic mind. And through that veil of the mental plane the infinite and indivisible expanse of Absolute Existence and Absolute Knowledge was manifest to a little extent here and to a greater extent there. Again, somewhere, due to the thickness of the veil, it got so completely enveloped as to appear to be non-existing. The Master, who was a spotless spiritual child to the Blissful Mother of the Universe, offered his body, mind, intellect and everything at Her lotus

feet, and experiencing in the super-conscious state that incorporeal bliss of Her Self, was about to merge himself eternally into Her. But reaching there, he came to know the Mother's will to be otherwise and in obedience to Her command, he forcibly enwrapped his mind with the covering of Vidya (knowledge) and remained thenceforth carrying out Her orders at all times. The Universal Mother of infinite mental expressions was pleased with him, and although She made him still retain his physical frame, She always lifted up his mind to such a great height of singular consciousness that his mind could invariably grasp all the ideas that were arising in the infinite cosmic mind. Those ideas were so much owned by him that it seemed the Mother was, as it were, the child itself and the child, the Mother;—"Name, place and Shyama (Mother) are all embodiments of consciousness!"

Reader, we have described as far as we can. Now, decide for yourself who was this Master, this personification of infinite thoughts!

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## HINDUSTANI CULTURE—I

**I**N his brilliant address at the Mysore Muslim Educational Conference Maulana Yakub Hassan made some interesting remarks about the past and the future of what he calls the Hindustani Culture. According to him, this particular culture has two characteristics—firstly, that it is purely Indian, having developed into its present form in the regions of the royal cities of Delhi and Lucknow, and thence spread to other parts of India, and secondly, that it is the outcome of the common life that the Hindus and the Muslims had to share in weal and woe for several centuries and the resulting fusion of the two cultural streams they originally represented. The Maulana points out that in the regions where this culture developed and has taken root, there is, in spite of religious differences, a remarkable oneness between the Hindus and the Muslims in their language, social customs, style of living, etiquette, dress, etc., and that the unique growth of art and architecture in the heydays of this culture was the result of the mutual understanding and harmonious working of these two religious communities. This common culture of the Hindus and the Muslims is, according to him, bound to spread over the rest of India and take firm root wherever it has hitherto not done so, and the Hindustani which has been recognised as the *Lingua Franca* of India is the channel through which this is going to be accomplished. Since the Hindustani culture is therefore a matter of national importance, we shall spend some thoughts on its origin and growth, and the contribution it has made to the enrichment of India's national life.

Of the two elements that have entered into this culture—the Muslim and the Hindu—the former was the more dominant one, and that naturally so. The social and political institutions of the Hindus of Medieval India amply demonstrated their inadequacy when they failed to keep order within and prevent incursions from without, and the Muslim conquest of the country came as a legitimate consequence of this. As the dominant people working a successful system of administration and leading the most efficient armies of the day, it is but natural that the Muslims should design the pattern of the new culture and the Hindus play the less important part of providing some of its raw materials and working out its details. The Muslims came to India as a set of conquerors, and it took several centuries before their pride of conquest could mitigate and give place to that sober mental attitude required for absorbing elements from the indigenous culture. The period of the Sultanate of Delhi was an era when the bitterness of conquest stood in the way of any compromise or reconciliation between the two parties, and the Sultans had to rule as the heads of a small body of military adventurers, alien in language and manners and hostile in religion to the mass of inhabitants of India, deriving support chiefly from descendants of similar adventurers who had settled in northern and western India during the preceding five centuries. But an era of peace and goodwill between the conquerors and conquered began with the secure founding of the Mughal Empire by Emperor

Akbar, the greatest of India's statesmen-rulers, and the first perhaps of her nationalist statesmen. Illiterate though he was, he had the statesman's insight and vision that could grasp the essentials of a difficult situation and plan and execute with an eye to the distant future. "The Sultans," says V.A. Smith, "had considered India to be a Muslim country and had taken credit to themselves whenever they allowed the Hindu majority to purchase their lives by the payment of a special tax.....Akbar at an early age saw the unsoundness of that position and realised that a stable Empire could not be established on the principles of the Sultanate. The most original of his ideas consisted in his recognition and practical acknowledgment of the principle that the Hindus as well as the Muhammadans should be considered eligible to the highest offices in the State, civil and military, and the adherents of every creed should have complete liberty to worship God after their own fashion." On the day this principle was recognised, we may say, the Hindustani culture was born. Its decay too might be traced from the day the same principle was revoked by Akbar's great grandson, Aurangzeb.

Though its birth was delayed for several centuries, its growth was however phenomenal from the very time of its inception. Akbar's reign saw its birth as well as the beginnings of its heydays. In his court and administration the Hindus and the Muslims met on equal terms and learned to respect each other's feelings and ways of life. Among his officers, civil and military, Raja Todar Mall and Raja Man Singh ranked the highest. His nine personal friends, known as the nine Jewels of his court, consisted of both Hindus and Muslims. Three of them, Raja Birbal, Raja Man Singh and Raja Todar Mall

were Hindus and the fourth, Tansen, the musician, was a Hindu convert. The introduction of Persian in the Revenue Department by Raja Todar Mall forced all Hindu officers to learn that language, and the way became open for them to rise to position and influence in the State in larger numbers. The same liberal policy was pursued by Akbar's son and grandson—Jahangir and Shah Jahan—, and favoured by the cordial relation that consequently subsisted between the two communities, the culture of Hindustan rose to magnificent heights. We shall consider below some of its distinct features and contributions.

The basis of this culture was the Mughal State. It is true that the Mughal State was an autocracy, military in character. Though the king, according to the Koran, is the commander of the Faithful responsible to the general body of Muslims, he was practically an autocrat in the absence of any constitutional body like the modern Parliament or the Roman Senate to check his power. But to conclude from this that the Mughal State was wholly based on force will be pursuing the fallacious procedure of applying our modern standards too rigorously to ancient institutions. No doubt there was no constitution in the modern sense, and the State was military in organisation through and through. Every important officer was enlisted as a member of the army, holding his rank as a *Mansabdar* with command over so many troops, and was promoted also in this capacity. Their pay too was sanctioned by *Bakshis* or Military Paymasters, and in strict theory there was no civil treasury. Yet in a sense, the State rested on popular sanction. In the 16th and 17th centuries the art of warfare had not yet become a specialised function as

today, and every man with a stout heart and a sturdy frame was a soldier fit to take the field at any time. Rebellions were easy to organise, and it was more true then than today that no State could last for any length of time, if it stood diametrically against the popular will. Hence if the Mughal State endured for over two centuries, strong and useful, it was because it fulfilled certain popular aspirations like the despotism of Pisistratus in Athens, Augustus in Rome, Charlemagne in Germany and the Tudors in England. In the first place they fulfilled the greatest need of India, viz., the preservation of internal peace and security from foreign invasions. For, as Sirkar has remarked, "Given peace without and spirit of peace within, the Indian people can advance in wealth, strength and civilisation with a rapidity rivalled only by the marvellous growth of their vegetation after the first monsoon showers." The unanimous testimony of Indian chroniclers and foreign travellers assures us that the Mughals secured this condition perfectly until the latter half of Aurangzeb's rule, and this together with the prosperity accompanying it enthroned their rule in the hearts of the people. Next, they assured freedom of worship and belief to all religionists. The Mughals in their palmy days freed the State from priestly influence and tried to establish a national government. Akbar not only removed the *Jizya* but even abolished the office of the Sadar or the highest ecclesiastical officer. His Divine Monotheism was a sincere attempt at founding a religion in which both Hindus and Muslims might participate. His successors also followed the same liberal policy, and as a European traveller of Jahangir's reign remarked, the Hindus and the Muslims lived "all mixt together and peaceably because

the Grand Mogul.....although he be a Muhammadan (but not a pure one, as they report) makes no difference in his dominions between one sort and the other; and both in his court and his armies, and even among men of the highest degree they are of equal account and consideration." In addition to this liberal policy, the State received popular approval for its strict non-interference in social matters and the respect it showed to village autonomy. It is not too much to say that the government that could give them comparative prosperity—for even V. A. Smith grudgingly admits that the hired landless labourers in the time of Akbar and Jahangir had more to eat in ordinary years than he has now—peace, and freedom to follow their own religion and social and communal life unmolested, had the popular support in addition to the strength it derived from armies. Hence, though Sirkar is right in saying from a constitutional standpoint that "the glitter of the gold in the Taj Mahal or the peacock throne ought not to blind us to the fact that in Mughal India man was considered vile—the mass of the people had no economic liberty, no indefeasible right to justice or personal freedom," the Mughal State, when viewed against the background immediately behind it, marked a progressive step in India's political life. We have therefore to say with Shafat Ahmed Khan, "The Mughal Government, it must be clearly understood, was essentially a national government. It was not the preserve of a narrow caste; it exercised no monopoly over the conscience of the individual; and no ebullition of fanaticism prevented it from performing its national policy with characteristic vigour. Its wonderful growth, remarkable persistence, and unique popularity were due mainly to its skilful

combination of the noblest features of Hinduism with the democratic principles and spiritual energy of Islam." Hence we conclude that though the State was autocratic and military in organisation, and though it had no declared policy of socialistic work as modern States, it had none the less noble aims and the hearty support of the people behind, since the interest of the sovereign and the people coincided in the best days of its rule. As Beni Prasad has pithily put it, it was not a police State but a culture State.

This Mughal State, as we have said before, was the basis of the culture of Hindustan, and it was largely through the functioning of the State that it developed and spread. Its achievements are, therefore, the achievements of Hindustani culture. Among these, the first was an administrative machinery on which was modelled the governments of even independent States of the day. A Hindu revivalist like Shivaji, as well as vassal Rajas like those of Jaipur and Bundelkand, copied it in the same way as the Indian States are doing today with regard to the British administration. The system itself was a compromise between the foreign Persio-Arabio system of the Abbaside Caliphs of Iraq and the Fatimid Caliphs of Egypt—the most efficient administrative systems of the day—on the one hand, and the indigenous Hindu traditions on the other. The principles of government, church, rules of taxation, departmental arrangements, the titles of the officials, etc., were all imported, but the Indian system was adopted in less essential matters as the spectacular side of politics, village administration, revenue collection, and the lower rungs of the official ladder. The Padshah was the supreme head of the State, assisted by

eight ministers who owed their position entirely to him. Whereas all other departments of the State were divided among these ministers, the supreme command of the armies was always retained by the Emperor, and was never vested in others. Of the ministers, the High Dewan alone strictly deserves the title since the others were really only Secretaries under him. The High Dewan was directly in charge of the Exchequer and Revenue, besides supervising the general administration; the Khan-i-Saman, of the Imperial Household; the Imperial Bakshi, of Military Pay and Accounts; the Chief Kazi, of Law, both criminal and civil; Sadar, of Endowments and Charity; Muhtasib, of Censorship of Public Morals; and Mir Aish, of Artillery. In the provinces or Subas, a more or less exact miniature of this system worked. The Padshah's part was played by the Subadar or Provincial Governor, and among his officers the chief was the Dewan. Directly appointed by the High Dewan, he reported to him every month about the happenings in the Suba, along with statements of cash balances, and acted as a check on the Provincial Governor. Besides him, the central government had public news-reporters and spies appointed by them, who sent weekly reports giving all details regarding the happenings in the Suba and the provincial courts, including the conduct of officials high and low. In district towns, officers called Faujdars preserved peace and order and backed the revenue officers with necessary force in collection work. The actual work of revenue collection was done by the Krories or Collectors, assisted by Amins who acted as arbitrators between the State and the peasant in assessment, and the Quangan-goes or village officers who provided all information regarding procedure,

precedent, history of the land, etc., for facilitating assessment. The system was a heritage from the old Hindu rulers, and was retained with little modification. In all important cities there were Kotwals or City Police Officers with sufficient number of troops under them. Every provincial town had a Kazi who settled cases that were taken to him, but the State arrangement for administration of justice being insufficient, most of the disputes were settled in the village assemblies themselves. So too the neglect of the villages necessitated the villagers themselves preserving peace in the villages with the help of their own officers, the Chowkidars. In fact the neglect of the villages and insufficient arrangement for administering justice were the worst features of the Mughal system.

But in spite of this it may be said that the Government aimed high even in these matters, as may be seen from the instructions issued to the officers, and the solicitude of the Emperors for giving justice to the poor and establishing peace and security; but if corruption and inefficiency defeated their purpose, it was because political institutions were still in their infancy, at the time we are dealing with. What was more, the system gave a greater homogeneity to India than ever before. Spreading as it did over a greater area than the Empires of Asoka or Samudra Gupta, it gave India for over two hundred years one official language, administrative system and popular *Lingua Franca*. Officers and troops were frequently transferred from one part to another of this vast Empire, and traders and travellers too moved from place to place unrestricted, thus helping the people to realise the oneness of the Empire. If the political institutions peculiar to Hindustani culture did not develop true national

spirit, it at least created a greater sense of India's homogeneity in the people's minds.

On the purely cultural side, its achievements were still greater. Among these the most important contribution was perhaps the creation of a profuse historical literature. The old Hindus were woefully lacking in historical sense, and except four political biographies, all of them without dates and hopelessly marred by rhetoric and tricks of style, Sanskrit literature has left no histories worth the name. But the Muslims introduced the historical spirit of the Arabs into our country, and thereby in the wake of the Hindustani culture an excellent historical literature full of facts and dates sprang up.

In the field of religion the Hindustani culture sought to bridge over the gulf of difference that separated the Hindus and the Muslims. We have already spoken of the splendid example of religious toleration set by Akbar and his two immediate successors. Among the people too, at least among those at higher levels of culture, movements for unification arose. The presence of Islam with its liberal social ideals in the neighbourhood called forth many dissenting movements in Hinduism, which sought to provide a common platform for both faiths by not insisting too much on rituals, dogmas and external marks. Such in fact were the aims of Kabir, Dadu, Nanak and Chaitanya, who received converts from both Hindus and Muslims, rejecting the views of orthodox Brahmins and Mullahs alike. Similarly, among the Muslims, there was the Sufi movement which was popular among the liberal and cultured Hindus and Muslims alike. In fact, during the 17th and 18th centuries the movement was so popular among the Hindus that a great mass

of Sufi literature, though of poor quality, came to be written by them. Sufism was, however, an intellectual and emotional enjoyment reserved for the cultured philosophers, mystics and authors. Some time back Justice Ranade and Sir Akbar Hydari in our own times have maintained that during the 17th and 18th centuries a cultural union between the Hindus and the Muslims was in progress, but we wish to point out that this was the case only among the cultured classes who came under the influence of Sufi and other liberal religious movements. As for the masses who could not appreciate these lofty ideals, petty customs and long-standing animosities were more real than the thought of the same God, and a common ideal of perfection they alike cherished. They lived amicably side by side, to be sure, but the religious neutrality held good only so long as the local society was static.

It was, however, in the field of arts and architecture that the Hindustani culture achieved its highest success. A new language, the Hindustani, came to be evolved as the result of the contact of Persian with the Vraj Bhasha of India, and it can for ever be a proud boast of Hindustani culture that the language that sprang up in its wake has come to be recognised as the *Lingua Franca* of India. But its literature did not develop in those early days owing to the passion of cultured Muslims for Persian while its purely Hindu form, known as Hindi, received a great stimulus and produced such illustrious literary geniuses like Tulsi Das. In the realm of music, Tansen created a great tradition for it, and with the active patronage of the rulers and aristocrats many musical academies flourished in the country. In the field of painting, a new school of arts called the Mughal school, noted for its

immense vitality and delicacy of design, came into existence, and it is a notable fact that this school still prevails in the country as our national art under different names. Its foundations were laid in the reign of Akbar by his drawing master Abdu-s-Samad, a master artist of the Persian school of painting. The foreign system thus introduced soon adapted itself to Indian conditions, for India's long artistic tradition of Ajanta fame still survived in the country, and though we do not find noted productions for a few centuries preceding Akbar, the artists of the indigenous school were able to make a mark in Akbar's court and soon assert their influence in the revival of painting introduced by Abdu-s-Samad. Abu-l Fazl testifies to their skill in highly eulogistic terms: "Their pictures surpassed our conceptions of things. Few indeed in the whole world are equal to them." Of the seventeen noted artists of Akbar's court, thirteen were Hindus, Basawan and Daswanath being the most eminent among them. The active patronage of painting continued through the reign of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, and the specimens as well as the traditions it has left behind form one of the brightest features of Hindustani culture in the past.

As in the case of painting, so too in architecture Hindustani culture introduced a new era of great splendour and refinement. The Muslim builders and the Hindu artisans, guided by the taste of cultured Emperors, produced a number of marvellous edifices, civil as well as ecclesiastical, that still decorate the great cities of Northern India. The semicircular radiating arch, vaulted dome and geometrically designed gardens were the peculiar contributions of the Muslims, and these combined with the vast technical skill of Indian artisans in carving, inlaying

and other kinds of ornamental work, produced those wonderful buildings culminating in the great Taj of the master-builder, Shah Jahan. The designers were free to plan according to their ideas without any considerations of race or religion, and the best product of the eclectic style resulting from it is the famous Fatehpur-Sikri. This eclectic style can claim to be a really national system since it harmoniously combines the best features of Hindu and Muslim architecture. When Indians in future seek to express their national aspirations through magnificent edifices, they cannot neglect the style which Hindustani culture developed in its palmy days. At a time when no State in the world had any educational policy worth the name, the cultured minds of the Mughals pitched upon the liberal patronage of fine arts as a suitable substitute, and

the artistic genius of the Indian people consequently entered into a period of great fruitfulness in literature, painting, music and architecture.

Thus the Hindustani culture arose as a result of the fusion between Hindu and Muslim civilisations. It spread its influence over the whole of India through the Mughal State which exercised authority over a greater part of the country than any empire before. Its achievements in the field of political and military organisation were considerable, and in its best days it brought the unity of India to the minds of the people with greater force than in any previous age of India's history. What it achieved in the field of fine arts is perhaps unsurpassed by any other culture, ancient or modern. But still it failed to solve the national problem of India, and we shall see why in the next issue.

## WAS THERE A UNITARY KARMA DOCTRINE ?\*

By

H. D. Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.L., (P.R.S.), Darsanasagara

(Continued from page 183)

WE pass on now to consider the theistic view of the doctrine of Karma. In ordinary usage a great gulf is set between *daiva* and *purusakara*—the grace of God and the gift of Fate, and much ingenuity has been spent to find out the exact proportion of each in the production of enjoyment and suffering. We may have a number of alternatives in this matter. Thus it is quite conceivable that God has already decreed as to who should be saved and who

damned and that in spite of our personal exertions we are unable to change our position in the divine scheme of things. This kind of predestination is not altogether unknown in Indian religious speculations; but it must be confessed that extreme Calvinism of this type is very rare in India inasmuch as it is regarded as a negation of the law of moral action. The Hindu has been accused very frequently of denying the reality of the world, but it is seldom

\* It is regretted that in the September issue the title should have been printed as THE VICISSITUDES OF THE KARMA DOCTRINE under which title the writer contributed an article to the Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya Commemoration Volume.

that he has denied the reality of moral responsibility—one or two stray passages asserting that our wills are not really our own but channels of divine activity, are rather exceptions that prove the rule. There was a strong resentment against the view of non-action (*akriyavada*) and mechanical perfection (a kind of moral orthogenesis) advocated by some of the heterodox teachers of the time of Mahavira and Buddha, and people have preferred to risk their salvation rather than accept the position that they would be saved without merit. They have been obliged to postulate, of course, a succession of lives to give to struggling mortals as many chances as they like to have in order to attain liberation; but they have strenuously resisted the temptation of making *mukti* easy by leaving things to the arbitrary decree of God, or proposing a single life for mortals and then providing a messiah to act as an intercessor and a redeemer. Predestination being thus excluded, there is the possibility that exertion and grace may jointly operate to produce a good result—that it is neither by grace alone nor by action alone that we can better our heavenly prospects. One will readily remember in this connection the simile of the cat and of the monkey used by two different schools of thought in South India. According to the first, it is not the activity of the kitten but the love of the cat that is responsible for removing the former from place to place—the cat takes the kitten in its mouth and deposits it wherever it pleases; while according to the latter the mother-monkey does indeed carry the young monkey from place to place, but then the young monkey has to clasp the mother firmly lest it should drop. According to the former, grace acts without reference to merit, while according to the latter merit alone does not suffice and grace

must supplement the personal contribution towards immortality.

That the introduction of the theistic element into a fairly self-contained theory was no easy task may be proved by the fact that the theists themselves did not know what exact amount was to be left to the initiative of the deity. Thus in Pauranic speculations we find that sometimes a god would be cursed in heaven and be sent down for expiation to this earth and in order to rouse the vengeful ire of God perpetrate dire mischief till the great God in anger destroys him after incarnating Himself. We are told that in spite of the fact that in his life he did nothing to merit a good fate, the mere fact that he died at the hands of a divine incarnation would entitle him to ready salvation. This is true also of demons and men who die at the merciful hands of God. We are sometimes told that it is far better to oppose God for three lives than serve Him for seven, for His anger terminates the life much more quickly in the former case, and as death at His hands is always welcome for its beneficial effect the immoral life that provokes His anger has no injurious effect at all. All that we want to know is whether this kind of grace is really operative in the case of those who are not living on earth as gods condemned but as genuine men (and demons) who cannot claim to have been sent down to earth for expiating the sins of their heavenly life. The general tendency is to regard this method as reserved for condemned gods who are supposed to have suffered enough by their earthly residence and whose immoral actions on earth are without effects on their destiny. The theory was propounded that one who is hostile to God is in a sense occupied with Him as much as a devotee is; for does he not think always as to how he

can spite God and mar His creation just as a devotee spends his time in thinking how he can best serve God and improve His creation ? This negative preoccupation with God is supposed to be almost as meritorious as positive adoration of God—God is as much an obsession with the enemy of God as with His friend. Fortunately, this doctrine is confined within a very narrow circle of believers or its effect upon the lives of sinners would have been incalculably mischievous, as it would have promised as much to the good as to the extremely bad.

It is curious to note, however, that except in the later theistic systems of India the gods were needed more for worldly benefit than for heavenly prosperity. The Vedic tradition of imploring the deities to help the worshipper in his earthly career by a liberal bestowal of children and cattle and by killing his enemies, though temporarily eclipsed in the Upanishadic times, did not take long to revive and it was freely believed that the worship of gods brought immediate results in the shape of worldly advancement. The gods were regarded as boon givers and when properly approached they did not fail to satisfy the desires of their devotees here below, whatever might be the additional benefit accruing hereafter in heaven. In the Puranas one meets with long lists of benefits resulting from certain Pujas and chanting certain hymns, the burden of the prayers being the attainment of sons, wealth and prosperity in general and the burden of the promises at the end of the hymns being the attainment of these objects without fail. It is evident therefore that gods could telescope time in fructifying the acts of worship—one need not wait till next birth to reap the fruits of religious practices. What else is a god good for if

he cannot grant the rewards of actions immediately or at least within a reasonable time ?

What is reprehensible, however, is that gods were sometimes regarded as tools for carrying out evil projects. How else can we explain the dark practices that were observed to bring injury to others with divine aid—seduction, death, etc. ? Unless one thought that gods cared more for flattery than for morality, one could not invoke divine help to realise one's immoral objectives. Here the old doctrine of the helplessness of the gods before a sacrifice correctly performed came to reinforce the belief in the omnipotence of the gods : how could gods refuse to oblige one who has been so persistent even in unreasonable requests and has pleased them so much with offerings ? After all, it is open to the aggrieved party to come forward with greater assiduity and better goods and the gods, unless they had irrevocably committed themselves, would reconsider their first decision and, if necessary, overrule it. And thus the game goes on. To add to the bitterness of the strife, if one god sides with one supplicant, another god can be persuaded to take up the side of the other party ; and thus human quarrels may assume cosmic proportions and the powers of the world may be ranged on opposite sides to oblige devoted servants contending for contradictory blessings.

That the danger is real and not merely imaginary is evident from the fact that in later literature formal expiation took the place of contrition of heart and people could perform a cruel act to please the gods and then perform an expiatory ceremony to take off the guilt of cruelty. The matter became worse when a mechanical money equivalence of moral guilt was evolved and it was supposed that as soon as a

certain amount of money was paid to the Brahmin the guilt was taken off. Here and there the remnants of a theory of genuine repentance survived and a heinous moral offence was regarded as irremediable by formal *prayaschitta*; but for the most part the same old doctrine of the efficacy of rites asserted itself and it was thought that there was no guilt that could not be properly expiated in a formal way. The expiation served to cancel the evil effects of immoral action and thus squared the heavenly accounts here below. The popular theory was much like the Iranian belief that it is the balance of merit that matters in salvation and that the earthly ledger could be shown to carry a credit balance provided precaution was taken to scotch the evil effects of immoral actions as they arose. There is nothing bad in this way of thinking and in fact almost all religions have been obliged to postulate something of this nature to hearten the fighters against evil; the danger lurks in the supposition that there could be a monetary compensation for a spiritual injury to the soul.

But the medieval faiths of India provided a way of escape from the blank prospects of personal endeavour. Possibly the belief was nursed in non-Aryan soil, as almost all the religious faiths of India have come from the South in their present form. The Aryan mind was prone to treat the gods as tools—it worshipped the gods and yet did not think generally that good came from them as gifts. It tended to think on the whole that the gods were pegs to hang one's Mantras on and that the good that came was almost automatic and did not need the consent or compassion of the gods. When magical effect was so confidently expected and gods could prevent neither

the accrual of fruits nor their maturation in the next life, it is no wonder that the Aryan mind, though moral and spiritual in tone and outlook, should find theism hanging rather loosely round about itself. No wonder, therefore, that practically all the philosophical systems of India should preach a kind of colourless theism when they were not definitely atheistic. Vedanta is the only noble exception, but then it was put into religious use mostly by South Indian thinkers in close alliance with sectarian gods.

The theistic faiths found it necessary to change the whole outlook upon life in their endeavour to bring the Karma doctrine within religious limits. Sometimes it was laid down that Karma was inert in character and therefore required the activity of God for getting into matter and producing the next embodiment. Karma by itself does not bring about the assemblage of material particles and provide a new body to the transmigrating soul. But theism was not bold enough to assert that God could ignore altogether the results of the actions of past life: what it did was to slur over this vital part and think that somehow the will of God remained unfettered even though it had to take note of the merits of a past life.

Theism did something more. In order to keep unaffected the initiative of God it laid down that God was able to suspend the operation of the energy of moral action by bringing about the dissolution of the whole world (*Pralaya*) irrespective of the fact that possibly all souls did not deserve a simultaneous dissociation from their bodies. The reason given was that the merciful God took pity on struggling mortals and gave them a temporary respite from the interminable toils of metempsychosis. At the end of the

period of dissolution the process started from where it had stopped and this starting of the world process in creation was also done according to the will of God and not timed by the destinies of souls. An automatic dissolution of the world and its recreation with the sleep and waking of God were also sometimes conceived—the world went back to its casual state and remained in suspended animation till the stirring life of God waked it to fresh activity.

Genuine theism, however, went further. It laid down that God could make light of all types of action and save whosoever He pleased although it did not for very good reasons think that He could damn any one He pleased. God could help men in two ways—He might change their heart and thus make them fit for spiritual reward indirectly, namely, by predisposing their mind towards good and thereafter rewarding their virtuous actions. Or He might grant them a good hereafter even though they have not deserved it by their own merits, which is a greater manifestation of His mercy. Stories are told of persons who have manifested nothing but hostility towards God and yet God in His infinite mercy has pursued them till they either repented or perished at His hands and in both cases they have reaped a blissful hereafter. Theism has even gone further and laid down easy methods of salvation. Stronuous thinking is not necessary to please God—rather the pride of intellect has proved many a man's fall. It is the lowly in heart that God loves most and without any knowledge of Mantras, any performance of sacrifices, any act of charity or any mortification of the flesh a devotee may reach a condition which is the envy of the wise and the adept. Abject self-surrender (*Prapatti*) and intense devotion (*Bhakti*) are the essentials of spiritual

good—not Jnana or Karma but Bhakti is the key to all blessedness.

Even sin can be expiated without formal penance. To feel that one does not deserve good by one's unaided effort, to lay before God all personal weakness, to confide in Him all the temptations of life and to seek His help in overcoming them, to take the help, if need be, of an intercessor,—of Lakshmi, for instance, in Vaishnavism, and of the Guru in most cults—are the ways of the spiritually wise. If knowledge and action are enjoined in the Shastras it is because through them Bhakti makes its appearance in the soul—without this culmination those two are useless. It is not necessary to retire to the forest to meditate on the soul or to go through the formalities of a costly sacrificial programme in order to be a Bhakta—in the everyday relations of life there are enough inklings of the attitude that the soul should take towards God. A father's affection, a mother's love, a wife's attachment, a husband's passion may all be a revelation of that yearning which the soul should have for God; and the response of God to the advances of the human heart is similarly measured not by the cold precision of an appraiser but by the warmth of parental solicitude—God gives more than He receives or how else would man be saved? How little do we deserve and how much do we receive !

And the gods are pleased with very little indeed. Take their names and worship their idols, visit their famous earthly seats and be kind to their followers—and you have deserved well of them by these small services. Above all, you are to feel that you are a tool in the hand of God and you are to consider all acts as proceeding out of Him. Nothing that is wrong can please Him and by wrong is not meant a

dereliction of formal rites but a genuine falling away from the ways of God. Dedicate the fruits of action to Him and feel that yours is to do your duties—the results of action lie in the hands of God. Abandon the conception of right in your dealings with God and do not think that you can coerce Him into any act of reward or punishment. You may deserve well and yet whether you would get the meed of your action or not depends entirely upon the will of God.

It is evident that we are here in an altogether different atmosphere and the language of religion wears here an entirely distinctive look. The Karma that saves is the worship of God and the adoration of His followers and devotees, and even that when God so pleases. All ideas of coercion of the gods and a quantitative equivalence of deed and fruition are at a discount. Simultaneously with this altered conception of Karma there reappears the theory of heavens of different types, meant for different sects. The objective now is not to attain a state but an

abode, not to lose oneself in the Absolute but to enjoy the blessed company of the adored deity in a heaven where all the denizens are devoted to the same God. The strenuous life of a seeker after spiritual illumination and the hard existence of a mendicant materially soften. Sometimes a perverted sense of what pleases God and His earthly representative, the priest and the Guru, brings about social corruption and debased cults make their appearance. Sectarian organisations which leave little scope for individual judgment and independent devotion make religion more monotonous and lifeless when not intimately accepted in spirit and in truth; circumambulation, pilgrimage and daily round of devotional duties (performed more out of habit than out of a felt need) stifle spiritual quest. The fluency of social life hardens into sects with hostile allegiances and the horizon of sympathy narrows down till it is felt that it is a part of religious merit to hate people of other denominations and to persecute them in the glory of God.

*(To be continued)*

## BHAKTI RASA *versus* KAVYA RASA

*By*

*Prof. Girindra Narain Mallik, M.A.*

**T**HE theory of Rasa undoubtedly forms one of the most important problems—at the same time a veritable puzzle—in the sphere of Sanskrit Literature. It appears mainly in three phases, *viz.*, in the Natural Sciences, in Poetics, in Vaishnava Theology. From whatever standpoint considered, pleasurable is the distinctive feature of the concept of Rasa. Yet it cannot but be admitted that there is a good

deal of difference in the character of the three kinds of pleasure. The pleasure we are concerned with from the standpoint of the Physical Sciences is transient and ephemeral owing to the impermanence of the stimuli as well as of the substratum of the pleasure. As contradistinguished from this normal pleasure of the world, the pleasure that characterises Rasa in the two other provinces is something of a high order.

But the mere fact of superior pleasurable-ness would, I am afraid, go little way in explaining the clear concept of Rasa; the more because there is a good deal of difference between the Rasa of the rhetoricians and the Rasa of the Vaishnava theologians. It is meet, therefore, that we should examine the doctrine of Rasa a little minutely and critically so as to arrive at the true concept of theological Rasa as distinguished from the Rasa of the rhetoricians.

*The Doctrine of Natakiya and Kavya Rasa critically examined*

The doctrine of Rasa appears in the sphere of Poetics as Natakiya Rasa and Kavya Rasa. Of these the former is regarded as the source of the latter. Now the oldest systematic exponent of the doctrine is Bharata. His theory of Rasa is very tersely indicated in the formula विभावानुभावव्यभिचारिसंयोगाद् रस-निष्पत्तिः—a formula which is so very ambiguous with respect to the exact significance of the two expressions संयोग and निष्पत्ति that it has caused a great deal of controversy in the interpretation thereof and thus has given rise to a good number of theories of Rasa. Examining these later theories which are based more or less on the philosophical bias of the exponents, we may briefly indicate thus the doctrine of Kavya Rasa in the language of Dr. S. K. De—"The Rasa is viewed as a pleasant sentiment belonging to the reader whose dormant emotions derived from experience or inherited instincts are evoked by the reading of poems into an ideal and impersonalised form of joy; an appreciation or enjoyment consisting of a pleasant mental condition in which the reader identifies himself with the feelings of the hero and experiences them in a generic form, the fullness of enjoyment depending upon

the nature and experience of the particular reader. The sentiment thus evoked is essentially universal in character, and the aesthetic pleasure resulting from it is not individual (even though enjoyed as an intimately personal feeling) but generic and disinterested, being such as would be common to all trained readers; it is therefore described as something supernormal (*Alowkika*) and invariably pleasant, not to be compared to the normal pleasures of life which have always a reference to one's personal relations or interests and which may be pleasant or painful." Rasa is described here as a pleasant sentiment, and the pleasure with which it is concerned is an impersonalised form of joy; and by the term 'impersonalised' is evidently meant permanent. Indeed Rasa, if its concept is rightly understood, is permanent, and in this, its distinctive feature, it is to be carefully distinguished from the normal transitory feeling of joy that is to be experienced in the phenomenal world. In this sense it is that rhetoricians describe Rasa as an *Alowkika* joy. In the language of Principal Shairp "Rasa is that intense intuition which goes straight to the core of an object and lays hold of the essential life of a scene; it is that by which Shakespeare read the inmost heart of man and Wordsworth of Nature. It is accompanied by a delight in the object or truth beheld, a thrill which is one of the most exquisite moods that man ever experiences." (*Aspects of Poetry*, pp. 6—8).

*The Alowkika Character of Kavya and Natakiya Rasa cannot be upheld*

If Rasa is thus a permanent joy quite different from the normal pleasures of life, the question arises 'how can such *Alowkika* joy come within the sphere of what is described as Kavya Rasa?'

The heroes and heroines that play their parts in giving rise to the Kavya Rasa are all individual beings of flesh and blood appearing temporarily in the world. An impermanent exciting cause can not possibly give rise to a permanent effect in the shape of some supreme joy. Hence it is that Vaishnava theologians consider as mistaken in views those that hold that phenomenal beings as Vibhavas give rise to Rasa, their reason being that such beings, themselves being attached to ephemeral objects, can cause nothing but an averseness in the mind, not to speak of their giving rise to a state of relish.

*The Locality of this Rasa is not settled*

Besides, from the standpoint of Rhetorics the locality of Rasa cannot be unquestionably settled. To elucidate further, Kavya is mainly classified into two kinds, viz.—*Drśya* (दृश्य) and *Sravya* (श्रव्य). In the former, the Vibhavas etc. are represented in words and exist only in the shape of *Natas* (नट) and their peculiar gestures and movements; in the latter, these are represented in words only. They thus having got no concrete existence and being regarded as things of the past, it cannot be said that Rasa is localised in them, or in the poem itself which, being a mere collocation of words, has its sole function of merely exhibiting the excitants etc. without the potency of actualising the state of relish. Nor is Rasa to be localised in the *Natas*, for they in most cases, being but skilful practised imitators of the acts etc. of the heroes and heroines, cannot possibly have any feeling of joy, not to speak of that transcendental joy which constitutes Rasa. If in any case an actor is to be found as experiencing a state of joy in which all thoughts of temporal objects are effaced altogether

it must be admitted that he, like a *Jivanmukta* soul doing the normal acts of life, does this thing in consequence of antenatal impressions and hence is to be treated for the time being as playing the role of a *Samajika*. The locus of Rasa, therefore, is to be fixed in the soul of the reader or hearer that enjoys a state of relish by identifying himself with the object of enjoyment. Although thus the locality of Rasa is rightly determined by rhetoricians like *Visvanatha* in the spectator (सामाजिक), yet the defect of this view is that it cannot explain the reason why the mind attains to the state of imbibing the relish called Rasa. The pleasure collateral upon the sentiment of Rasa is no doubt supersensuous and transcendental, and to be the fit receiver of such joy the mind which is but a sensuous thing must already have undergone a transformation. If, again, it is redargued that the supreme joy in the mind of heroes and heroines is transfused into the mind of the *Samajika*, there comes in an objection: how can such transfusing take place on account of the medium of the poem or the characters thereof—a medium in which there is no sentiment at all?

*Its Genuineness as Rasa indirectly Denied by a Class of Rhetoricians*

Moreover, the fact that Kavya Rasa is not a genuine state of relish is indirectly admitted even by a class of theorists on Poetics. Thus the author of the *Rasagangadhara* while quoting the view of some contemporary writers says,—"In poetry as well as in Dramaturgy, in the midst of the Vibhavas etc., displayed by poets and *Natas*, the *Rati* of *Sakuntala* etc., towards *Dushyanta* and the like, being given out by means of the process of explication, the thought of the *Samajika* which lies within his mind in the form of an

impression and which is now regarded as an error or defect, causes him to identify himself with Dushyanta etc., that is to say, gives rise to an ascription of Dushyantahood; his ego then becomes pervaded by this ascribed concept which is evidently an unreal idea, and in the ego so affected the *Rati* in respect of Sakuntala etc., flashes forth just in the same way as the notion of a piece of silver appears over a piece of naacre pervaded by ignorance. The *Rati* thus becoming sensed is termed *Rasa*. *Rasa*, therefore, is actualised by means of an erroneous notion just as the erroneous notion or ignorance gives rise to naacrine silver; and such *Rasa* would necessarily disappear with the disappearance of that defect.\* If *Rasa*, thus, as conceived by rhetori-

cians, is originated from a false notion, it must be admitted that it is not a genuine state of relish, and consequently its character of permanence must be denied.

*The Doctrine of Bhakti Rasa must be Upheld*

In the face of the above objections, the theory of *Kavya Rasa* cannot stand the test of the true significance of *Rasa*. All that can be said in its favour is that the pleasure derived from the reading and hearing of *Kavyas* and *Natakas* is something of a superior order, being higher in character than the normal pleasures of life. But if *Rasa* is to be understood as the mental state of relishing some supreme permanent joy, the several excipients, ensuants and accessories that go to constitute the inseparable factors in the actualisation of that joy must themselves be permanent and supreme. In other words, the doctrine of *Rasa* as genuine *Rasa* holds more plausibly in the sphere of *Vaishnava Theology* than in that of *Poetics*. What now is the significance of *Rasa* according to *Vaishnava Theology*?

An answer to this question will be the subject-matter of our next article.

\* c. f. नव्यास्तु काव्ये नाट्ये च कविना नटेन च प्रकाशितेषु विभावादिषु व्यञ्जनव्यापारेण दुष्यन्तादौ शकुन्तलादिरतौ गृहीतायामनन्तरं च सहृदयोऽस्मिन् तस्य भावनाविशेषरूपस्य दोषस्य महिम्ना कल्पित-दुष्यन्तत्वावच्छादिते स्वात्मन्यज्ञानावच्छिन्ने शुक्ति-काशकल इव रजतखण्डः समुत्पद्यमानोऽनिर्वचनीयः सात्त्विकस्य शकुन्तलादिविषयरत्यादिरिव रसः । अयं च काव्यो दोषविशेषस्य नाशश्च तत्राशस्य ।

(Rasagangadhara of Jagannatha Panditiraja p. 25, Bombay Edition.)

(To be continued)

यथाद्रिप्रभवा नद्यः पर्जन्यापूरिताः प्रभो ! ।

विशन्ति सर्वतः सिन्धुं तद्वत्त्वां गतयोऽन्ततः ॥

O Lord, just as rivers, rising from mountains and made full by Indra (rains), enter the one sea from all directions, so do all the courses of worship finally find their goal in Thee.

## VEDANTA IN THE MAKING

By

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(Continued from page 228)

**T**HE first thing that arrests our attention in this steady advance towards monotheism is the idea of a transcendent reality—a world of Forms or Essences—standing over against the phenomenal world. This is clearly implied in the distinction that is consistently made between the two aspects or forms—one supreme or refined (परम) and the other lower or gross (अवरं)—of each of the more important gods, such as *Agni* (fire-god), *Vayu* (wind-god), *Indra*, (the sovereign or champion god, the Indian Zeus), *Soma* (the moon-god, the God of inspiration or elixir of life), and *Suryya* (the sun-god). Accordingly, the gods have been characterised as the 'twice-born' (द्विजन्मानः)\*. For example, *Agni* is invoked, and the prayer runs thus: "O *Agni*, we shall offer our homage unto thy higher ancestry, glorify with hymns thy lower or proximate place of birth."† Then, again, in the famous context in which mention is made of the last rites of the dead and the belief entertained that the eyes relapse unto the sun and breath unto the wind, *Agni* comes in for a double-edged reception. Referring to the fire on the funeral pyre, the worshipper exclaims: "I repudiate this *Agni* which is the consumer of flesh; let this muck-carrier retire into the abode of Yama, the god of death. May the other *Agni*,‡ who is here, knowingly carry the obla-

tion unto the gods!" By way of precedence, therefore, that *Agni* is invoked who is supposed to be the custodian of the immortal part of the dead, and is importuned thus: "O *Agni*, do thou transport, by virtue of that gracious appearance of thine, this departed soul unto the abode of the virtuous."\* This invocation irresistibly reminds one of a kindred prayer in the *Isavasyopanishad*, addressed to *Pushan*,† the solar god and, what is more to the point, to *Agni* in the same context: "O Fire, lead us on by a virtuous path to our reward. O God, thou knowest all our deeds; take off the crooked things from us. We offer addresses in homage unto you." (अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान्निश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान्। युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो मृयिषां ते नम उक्तिं विधेम ॥) The point to be specially noted here is the investiture of *Agni* with an all-embracing knowledge and custodianship of the moral distinctions. Similarly, *Vayu* is supposed to possess a superior and an inferior form—in its superior form going by the name of "*Matarisva*".‡ In the case of *Indra*, *Soma*, and *Suryya* (as sometimes also in the case of *Agni*) three, and not merely two forms are recognised—the lower or gross, the higher or refined, and the highest, supreme or eternal. *Indra* is held to sustain two orders of existence and the third abides eternal and immutable in

\* *Rgveda*, VI. 50. ii. † *Ibid*. II. 9. iii.  
‡ *Ibid*. X, 16 ix.

\* *Ibid*, X, 16, iv. † Verse 16.  
‡ *Rgveda*, I. 168. i—vi; VII: 56, ii—xii  
VIII, 94, ii—x; X, 186. i—iii.

heaven.\* This is in substantial agreement with the ascription of "three strides" (तीणि पदा)†, one of them being designated the perfect or the supreme *locus standi* (परमं पदम्), revealing itself to the wise and sustaining within it a fountainhead of nectar (मध्व उद्सः)‡. So far as Soma is concerned, people think that they can partake of Soma by extracting the juice from the Soma-plant, but the wise alone know that the true Soma is beyond the reach of mortals||, is the seer of all, and shining resplendent in his third abode (तृतीयं धाम)§. Finally, in the well-known *Rk* (*viz.* that numbering 10) of the 50th *Sukta* of the 1st *Mandala*, *Suryya* appears as having three forms or levels of existence; one is the gross form (उद्) which dispels the darkness of the terrestrial region, the next higher is that of a god among the gods (उत्तमम्) and finally the highest is that of supreme effulgence which is but the Supreme Being.\*\*

The other notable factor in promoting the advance from polytheism to monotheism is the concept of *Rta* (ऋतं) as the sustaining principle alike of the gods and the world. Standing, as it does *inter alia*, for an impersonal order or law, pervading the physical and the moral world, it may be said to have created a landmark in the history of Vedic thought and culture. With regard to the meaning of a term of such mighty importance, doctors must needs differ. In the very first *Sukta* of the 1st *Mandala*, there occurs the term *Rta* (wherein *Agni* is being extolled as the sustainer and glorifier of the *Rta*), and *Sayana* interprets it thus : ऋतस्य सत्य-

स्यावश्यम्भाविनः कर्मफलस्य. *Yaska* favours the interpretation of it as *Satyam* (सत्यम्).

In tracing the origin and growth of the meaning of the term, *Max Muller*\* has recorded the opinion that the term *Rta* originally stood for the appointed course of the sun, the moon and the stars; subsequently, it came to mean the 'sacrifice' regulated by their periodical movements and, finally, law or *dharma* in its ordinary usage. Prof. *Keith*'s construction of the term, with variations in emphasis, provides an interesting study. "In the physical world," says he† "there rules a regular order, *Rta*, which is observed repeatedly, and which is clearly an inheritance from the Indo-Iranian period;" and "from the physical it is an easy step to the conception of the *Rta*.....in the moral world." Later by way of developing the point of ethical interest in *Rta* he proceeds to observe that "the term for cosmic order, *Rta*, and its opposite, *Anrita*, express also moral order as in the dialogue of *Yama* and *Yami*; *Rta* forbids and doubtless also commands positive action. *Rta* is more than truth, *Satya*, nor can we say with *Wundt* that Vedic India makes the good and the true identical, though truth is given an extraordinary high place, in its various senses of accuracy of statement, faithful performance of promises, and the assurance that what should happen will happen, and that the order of things is as it ought to be. Law is denoted by *Dharman*, which denotes that which supports and that which is supported; it applies like *Rta* to all aspects of the world, to the sequence of events in nature, to the sacrifice and to man's life."‡ But the

\* *Ibid* VII, 51, iv & 52, vii.

† *Ibid*, I, 22, xvii & xx.

‡ *Ibid*, I, 164, v.

|| *Ibid*, X, 86. iii. § *Ibid*, IX, 96, xviii.

\*\* *Ibid* I, 60, x.

\* Vide his *Origin and Growth of Religion*, pp. 245—50.

† The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads, Vol. I, p. 83.

‡ *Ibid*, pp. 248—9.

cumulative force of all textual criticisms and inferences seems to be nullified by the somewhat damaging statement that 'the moral element in the *Rgveda* and the subsequent literature is of comparatively small extent, and the vast majority of the Vedic hymns are not concerned in the remotest degree with questions of morals.\*' In meeting the point of criticism, well-informed as it is, one should not take one's stand upon the quantitative aspect of the question: *non multa, sed multum* should rather be the guiding principle here. For, truly a grain of philosophic insight can remove mountains of textual interpretations. There is hardly any room for doubt that these hymns of the *Rgveda* which are indisputably enunciative of a moral tone cannot be counterbalanced, far less outweighed and overruled, even by a 'vast majority' of hymns that are morally neutral. If it can be proved that the *Rgvedic* gods, as the *prius* or precondition, both logically and causally, of the physical or natural order of things, are the sustainers of, and sustained by, the *Rta*, the moot question of the ethics of the *Rgveda* will no longer remain a dubious issue.

That all the gods, both collectively and distributively, are presiding over, and permeated by, the *Rta* is almost a perpetual refrain in the *Rgveda*. Instead of hunting after isolated statements, the more judicious course would be to appeal to the famous *Īmsavati Rk* (IV. 40. v.) where *Īms* recognition has been urged as a matter of principle. It is held therein that everything in this universe has its respective sphere or locus—the sun in the sky, the priest at the altar, the guest in a house. But the *Rta* is here, there

and everywhere dwelling among men, in places glorified and of sacrifice, in the water, in the sky, in sunlight, in the mountains, and in truth. Sayana thinks that this *Rk* only purports to establish a triune Essence or a perfect oneness of the following three of the trinity—the golden-headed Deity that presides over the sun, the universal physical principle or soul substance immanent in all living beings, and the Supreme Being or Brahman devoid of all determinations. One may reasonably refuse to follow Sayana's lead here; but, then the *Rk*, taken by itself, is a standing testimony alike to the moral grandeur of the theme, and the pre-eminently ethical character of the *Rta*. Thus the point we sought to establish—namely, a pre-established harmony and reciprocity between the gods and the *Rta*—is here proved to demonstration. Although the gods, as a rule, stand intimately related to the *Rta*, it is the triad of Varuna, Mitra, and Aryyaman that is credited with the guardianship of the moral law, or the *Rta*. All the relevant hymns are, by way of pre-eminence, addressed to Varuna of fixed purpose (वृत्तवतः), who along with his inalienable partner, Mitra, is the custodian of the moral order of the world, the *Rta*, with its double aspects of orderly conduct (व्रत) and essential nature of things (सत्य). It is in the deviation from the established order of things and customary morals that the consciousness of sin or moral delinquency consists, and nearly all the hymns to Varuna throw into prominent relief an acute sense of moral guilt on the part of the wrongdoer who trembles 'likes a guilty thing surprised' before Varuna, the omniscient and the omnipresent, who has a thousand spies and knows all things—who is present as the third wherever

\* Ibid, p, 249.

two men come together\*. These furnish the most convincing proof, if proof at all were needed, regarding the indigenous origin and growth of the notion of sin in the Vedas. Even Prof. Keith found a hard nut to crack here. "It is", he observes, "by no means certain exactly in what way the conception of the connexion of Varuna with sin sprang into such prominence, as we assume, as we must in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that the conception of sin as punished by Varuna is an Aryan one, and not a conception borrowed from a Semitic race." † Beginning, therefore, with the concept of *Rta* as the natural or physical order, there is a steady and continuous advance through the interpretation of it as social law or customary conduct till it reaches its culminating point in a cosmic justice or equity, a moral order of the world. The *Rta* thus stands as much for a physical as for a moral order—the former standing in an instrumental or subordinate relation to the latter. What affords

an historic parallel to this is the Stoic maxim of 'life according to nature', which is but another way of saying 'life according to reason' inasmuch as the whole world is pervaded and penetrated by a 'fiery breath' which, in the Stoic rendering of it, is a 'germinative reason'. If, therefore, an ethics of the *Rgvada*, rooted in the *Rta*, be at all conceded, it is not to be construed as an ethics of Naturalism with its apotheosis of *la bête humaine*. It provides, in the strictest sense, an ethics in accordance with the highest human ideal which was destined to realise all its ethical implications in the Law of *Karma*. Of that there is surely no room for misgivings; for accredited exponents of the philosophy and history of religion, like Pfeleiderer, \* view 'the *Rta* and Karma of the Hindus' as more or less hyphenated in their nature, and classify them, on grounds of functional similarity, with the *Nemesis* of the Greeks, the *Ashavaista* of the Persians and the *Tao* of the Chinese.

\* Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*, p. 247.

† Ibid, p. 246.

\* Vide his *Philosophy and Development of Religion*, Vol. I, sec. IV.

(To be continued)

## THE BHAKTI CULT IN INDIA

By K. A. Krishnaswamy Aiyar, B.A.

THE course of religious and philosophic development in India has been peculiar. The primitive elements, or what might be regarded as such, have been later growths, and what is highly metaphysical and could not have been arrived at without a long course of mental preparation is found to have been widely flourishing in the earliest ages. Long before concepts of monotheism came to prevail, there was indeed a belief in various gods who

were the personified powers of Nature, such as Varuna, Rudra, Indra, Mitra, Vishnu, etc., but even when the rituals reigned supreme as in the Brahmana period, an enlightened faith in one Great Principle of the Universe dominated the views of the sages. These virile thinkers, the Mimamsakas, boldly emphasised the duty of 'action' as the only legitimate purport of the Vedas, irrespective of rewards in a higher world, and even of its reality

or that of the gods. Religious works had to be performed whether the gods existed or not, and whether the performance led to heaven or not. When the popular mind stood aghast at such a severe and unemotional declaration, the writers of Puranas supplied the supporting assurance, by a vivid and realistic description of the numerous heavenly worlds, and the incomparable joys and pleasures of a life therein, awaiting the souls that had acquired merit by a meticulous adherence to the ritualistic observances. Similarly, faith in a personal God, clothed with Power and Mercy, came to displace the ancient doctrine of a single Principle, and of the multiplicity of the Vedic gods.

But it would not be safe to assert that the conception of a personal God is altogether new. Among the gods of the Vedic Period, some were raised above the rest, such as Brahma, Rudra and Vishnu, who thus came to enjoy a temporary equality. The process of elimination, however, continued till Brahma disappeared from the earth, and Rudra under the name of Siva, and Vishnu in the form of Rama or Krishna were left to contend for mastery. Although a Modern Hindu is strictly monotheistic, the war between the two rival sects of Siva and Vishnu has not ceased, and each has a strength of following and sacred literature to support its claims. The cult of devotion to one God, without any irreverence to the inferior gods, has become wide and popular.

After Buddhism dealt a deadly stroke at the sacrifices, the latter no doubt have continued to be honoured in a harmless form, but in no sense can they be regarded as retaining that life and prestige in Modern Hinduism that they did in the Pre-Buddha age. Impact with Mahomedanism also con-

tributed to lay a stress on the two principles of the Bhakti cult, viz., (1) The One God as a Personal Being and (2) the equality of all souls.

In the earliest Upanishads, the seekers after Truth were divided into two classes, the one relying on meditation and the other on reasoning. The former soon crystallized into the Yogic school and the latter into the Vedantic. About the beginning of the 11th century A. D. Modern Hinduism arose by absorbing the beliefs and practices of the Non-Aryan Hindus who were now taken into the fold, and by adopting the higher doctrines of Buddhism which had appealed to the people, and this readjustment was made necessary to make Hinduism as attractive as Buddhism had been, before it was driven out from its motherland. In fact this adaptation and modification, so vital to the interests of Hinduism, began with the appearance of Buddhism, and has continued even after it vanished. Those that wonder with pride and complacency at the survival of Hinduism, in the midst of immense antagonistic forces, rarely realise through what perilous straits it has passed, how many of its pet doctrines were flung away, and what new beliefs and rites it had to take into itself before attaining to such a miraculous longevity.

So long as the Hindu Aryans were a small and homogeneous group of a highly intellectual, spiritual and moral order, the Vedic injunctions would be strictly enforced, and Vedantic ideals appreciated and honoured. But with the growth of society, with the admission of new heterogeneous elements, and with a powerful rival in the shape of Buddhism, Hinduism had to change its policy and even its fundamental tenets, to secure its own preservation. The abstract concepts of the

supplied no solace to the average soul, and Yogic meditations and practices were beyond the reach of the common people. A principle was to be formulated which welded the various communities into a homogeneous entity and bound them in a common faith. The rules of caste had to be relaxed, and a spiritual democracy was to be acknowledged. Such was the origin of *The Bhakti Cult*.

Both Brahmins and non-Brahmins strove without distinction for this Unification of Religion. In Bengal, the Panjab, the Mahratta Country, in the east and the south of the Peninsula, holy men arose who lived by their faith, renounced the world, and preached love and mercy to all beings. Some of them were devoted to Vishnu, and some to Siva. Moving accounts have been written of the miracles wrought by them, their trials and tribulations and of the numerous instances in which they experienced the Grace of God and His immediate presence by their unwavering faith in Him, to the exclusion of all learning and logic-chopping. The Bhakti Cult, or the cult of Faith was so called because its followers by a conquest of the flesh and rising above all worldly desires devoted their whole lives to meditation on God, and his infinite attributes, singing His praise, serving Him, and preaching His Mercy all the hours of day and night, and depending wholly on public charity for their own physical sustenance. It is but natural that such selfless souls should have exercised an unlimited influence upon those who came in contact with them. Their simplicity, sincerity and purity impressed the people as no fine-spun theories or abstruse doctrines could. Some of them were great thinkers like Ramanuja and Vallabha, while others were poets like "nikka Vassagar, and singers like

Chaitanya. The heaven of Devotion soon spread throughout the length and breadth of India, and from a mere spark the new spirit grew into a conflagration. While the roots of the metaphysical Truth were still watered and kept alive by a handful of the learned, the plant of Faith rose into a tree bearing blossoms and fruits which fed and comforted the large majority of the common people. Modern Hinduism has thus acquired strength, beauty, and what is more, life and intelligibility to the masses—a fact which has made it invulnerable to the assaults of alien faiths. Idolatry, no doubt, has not become less popular, but it has acquired a new meaning, and provides a new comfort which the dry argumentation of the philosophers could no more claim to possess or produce.

The first and foremost of the protagonists of the new cult was Ramanuja a Vaishnavite reformer of Southern India (1150 A.D.). He declared that faith was above the distinctions of caste and acknowledged the sacred character of the pious hymns composed by various devotees in Tamil, and gave them a place side by side with the Vedas. In his famous comment on the Brahma Sutras, he attacked the Illusionism of Sankara, and gave *faith* a higher place than that accorded to knowledge. All souls were equal and were equally entitled to the Grace of the One God Vishnu. "He converted the Jain prince of Mysore to Vaishnavism and accepted converts from every class."

Fifth in the apostolic succession from Ramanuja was Ramanand (1300—1400) who spread his doctrines in Northern India. He chose his disciples from "the despised classes." "The life of a disciple was not one of ease. He was to forsake the world and live on alms. His old age found an asylum in some Monastery of the brotherhood." (P. 262

Sir W. Hunter's *Indian Empire*). While Ramanuja wrote in Sanskrit and addressed the pure Aryan castes, Ramanand appealed to the masses in their own dialects, which led to the development of the Hindi literature.

His disciple Kabir spread the cult in Bengal (1380—1420). He tried to build up a religion that was a blend of Hinduism and Mahomedanism. He laid stress on purity of life and a perfect faith in God. "Behold," he said, "but One in all things. He is both Ali and Rama." Kabir had numerous followers in the Central Provinces, Guzerat and Deccan. Ramanand had identified the deity with the worshipper. Kabir extended the doctrine by explaining all distinctions of life as due to Maya or illusion. "To recognise the One divine spirit under these manifold illusions is to obtain emancipation and the Rest of the Soul." Offerings and sacrifices were of no avail, but the true means were faith and meditation.

Chaitanya (1486—1527) carried forward the cult into Orissa. He renounced the world at twenty four, and vigorously preached the doctrine of faith. All men were capable of faith and all castes became by faith equally pure. He taught that liberation did not annihilate the individuality of the soul but meant freedom from the stains and frailties of the body. The released souls dwelt for ever in regions of bliss and beauty. The descendants of the followers of Chaitanya are known as Gosains. After Chaitanya's death a sect arose among his followers who asserted the spiritual independence of women.

Vallabha Swami was the next great Vaishnavite reformer (1520). His doctrines were unique. God, he said, was to be worshipped not in poverty and solitude but in the midst of life's enjoyments. He wrote a commentary

on the Brahma Sutras, and identified Vishnu with Bala Gopala or Krishna. This sect seeks its converts not among the poor and low classes but "among wealthy bankers and merchants to whom life is a thing to be enjoyed, pilgrimage a holiday excursion, or an opportunity for trade."

The progress of Vaishnavism in the North had its repercussions among the Saivites of the South, and great teachers arose who taught devotion to Siva as the only means of obtaining emancipation. Immense volumes of Tamil literature were written, in which the lives of Tamil Saints were described in detail—one of the most famous of these was Nanda, a Pariah slave, who obtained salvation through the grace of Siva at Chidambaram.

On the whole the Bhakti Cult has proved a spiritual prop to the dilapidating structure of the national faith and but for the cult, Hinduism with its out-of-date practices, unpopular rites, and abstract concepts must have long ago been swept into the limbo of oblivion or neglect, and remained only as an interesting curiosity to the student of extinct human institutions.

There is still a sunset radiance which keeps alit the religious horizon of India. Ceremonials of private worship in Hindu homes, and of public adoration in holy temples are mechanically maintained. Divine acts of bathing, yachting, sporting and wedding are annually celebrated and thousands of pious spectators turn out from towns and villages to witness the Car festivals. But there is a melancholy cast over all. The old enthusiasm has vanished, and the interest created is artificial, depending on fire-works, music and dancing, and trade activities. Recitals of the adventures and sufferings and triumphs of great devotees are indeed held under the name of Harikathas, but they

attract mostly women and the ignorant. The great work accomplished by the strenuous labours of the Bhaktas threatens to collapse, in the indifference to religion and spiritual ideals that has supervened owing to the public mind being now deeply agitated by political and economic problems.

India is rapidly passing through a terrible crisis. No prophet can foretell what shall be the religious future of India. For one thing it is certain that orthodox views are doomed to evaporate. Nor is there any human probability that Christianity, Mahomedanism or any other foreign faith can have a better chance with the nation. Skepticism sits like an incubus on every one of them. Modern science and philosophy, the race for power and wealth, the competition for public honours, adoption of Western modes of life, the spread of newspapers and light literature—these inducing in the public mind, a spirit bordering on aversion to those sublime ideals for which the sages of ancient India lived and died. 'This-worldism' is slowly swallowing up the glories of the Past.

#### *Critical Value of Faith and Reason*

It is difficult to adjudge the claims of faith and reason to supremacy in the formation of belief. While life is action, conscious action proceeds on belief. A

man of faith jumps to his belief without going through the intermediary steps of reasoning. A man of reason makes sure of every one of these. Faith is bold, quick and impulsive; reason, suspicious, slow and deliberative. Faith is credulous, flexible and generous; reason calculating, steady and circumspect. Faith promotes superstition and questionable practices. Reason is cautious, discriminative and iconoclastic. Some temperaments favour faith, while reason is the professed guide of all. Questions, such as the existence of God, and of a future life are insoluble to dualistic reason, but faith finds a ready solution for them. Ethics to dualistic faith rests on authority and tradition, while reason supplies it with a speculative basis. Faith comforts and reason convinces. Faith flies to unknown regions, while reason is content to walk the solid earth. Faith relying on sudden intuitions may delude itself and reason depending upon assumed premises may be often fallacious. Even sticklers for reason may be often obliged to act on faith, while men trusting to faith may feel the need to defend it on rational grounds. The emergencies of life require both, and cannot be met by a fanatical repression of either. But where reason distinctly points to one way, it is unwise to be led by faith into another.

# ETHICS OF THE UPANISHADS

By

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## *(8) The Jivan Mukta*

**T**HE different stages in Jivan Mukti are, therefore, a psychological possibility based upon the rearing up of the mental and vital life in a way which can reflect the light of the soul in uninterrupted perpetuity. The oscillation of the mental dynamism cannot stop unless the forces are completely exhausted; and, therefore, with the visitation from the living soul, the desired consummation, the forsaking of the mental, vital, physical sheaths, does not at once take place. Nor can the vision of truth leave the mental being blank with its native forces moving in it. The Jivan Mukta gets his psychic being finer and finer, and therefore, his mental dynamism works in a different way from the rest. It is finer and therefore can be wielded in any way, for surer and finer activity.

But with the finer vitality and mentality, with the quicker and subtler dance of life, with greater freedom over the flesh, the emancipated souls sometimes become the centres of uncommon power, what Keith calls "unhindered powers, the ideal of a despot". The wide diffusion of their mental being has the effect of having the subtle forces of nature at their command. The great illumination gives them a transcendence and a psychical being with fine receptivity to catch and command the subtle forces. The Jivan Mukta, therefore, transcends the ethics of common adaptation, for if his vision gives the freedom of being, it also endows him with powers. Powers

follow illumination; the psychic change is the secret of powers.

The powers that work in him are cosmic: and therefore his conduct more often baffles our moral estimate, by its overpoweringness and incalculability. The Ohhandogya gives a description of the complete autonomy of will of the liberated souls. Their will is unfailingly effective not only on the physical but also on the finer planes of existence. Their wills are immediately creative; and in this respect their will has a supernatural bent in as much as they do not require the intervention of any other thing to give them proper shape and effective expression. Though this autonomy of will is a source of uncommon power, liberated souls do not disturb the cosmic harmony. They cannot. They will not. Because the world-harmony reflects the greatest wisdom and the highest power of Isvara, the autonomy of will and powers however high and great, cannot interfere with cosmic will and power. And there is no necessity of interfering as the cosmic order seems to the privileged knowledge as perfectly regulated. And from the nature of the case they cannot interfere. The identity of being is a fact in transcendence, but the identity of being cannot give the identity of powers, for powers are the possessions of the divided souls. The Upanishads emphasise the identity of being, but not the identity of powers. Powers are the possessions of personalities, and personalities have

hierarchies according to their psychic fitness and possibilities.

But power is not the ideal sought. If it comes it comes unawares, with purity and elasticity of being. It should not be lost upon us that the transcendence of nature's forces endows us with a mastery over these forces, and in the wise man the supra-human forces become active. The greater knowledge gives more facilities. The loss of individuality, the creation of nature, is replaced by the awakened self and the sleeping powers soon begin to stir in the wise. But the ideal of power has never been great in the Upanishads, for the wise man is beyond all that can be wrought by engratting of psychic powers. He is always awake in transcendence. The mental being recovers itself from the intoxication of powers. Powers follow when they are least sought, and the wise never fall a prey to them. They become indifferent to forces. The more this ideal is actualised, the more the adept becomes free from psychism, good, bad, and indifferent. Wisdom is, therefore, so complete and unique a transcendence that nothing can quite describe it. The psychic powers may move with the relaxation and elasticity of psychic being, but these are of no consequence to the wisdom of transcendence.

The Jivan Mukta, therefore, in the long run becomes anxious to be more and more completely transcendent not only in wisdom, but in adaptation, for the more complete is the vision of transcendence the greater is the freedom from psychic powers. The silence is the ideal, and in the complete fruition of individual life, the adept leaves aside the psychical and the physical complex and passes into the calm.

Keith thinks that the Jivan Mukta is the ideal of a despot, but Keith is wrong. Emancipation puts us beyond the

limitations of life, ethical or spiritual, as commonly understood. He is above all the sense of a personality and an agent. He moves but really he moves not. He has the vision of completeness. Therein he is fixed. He has no desire, he has no end, either personal or cosmic in the true sense of the word. He is truly detached. True detachment follows the transcendent vision. It sees no value either in shrinking or in assertion. It maintains the even attitude in both, because it knows that the self transcends both. The emancipated soul is, therefore, in every state and station of life quite indifferent to the urges of life. He avoids both the positive and the negative attitudes of life, but he feels he is the fullness and the completeness of life. A despot is conscious of his powers; a Jivan Mukta is not. He is not to be supposed as the product of a long evolution through which he has acquired powers. Powers he does not seek, powers seek him. And, therefore, no virtue can be attributed to him. He has transcended both activism and quietism. He is free from the impelling of life, individual or cosmic.

There is, therefore, a difference between the person moved by a cosmic impelling and the Jivan Mukta serving a cosmic end (if we are permitted to speak in this strain). The former is conscious as an agent, the latter is not. The former is conscious of his responsibility, the latter is not. The former may be attuned with the cosmic life, the latter transcends it and hence if the latter moves for a cosmic end of humanity, he is not, strictly speaking, so conscious. He is conscious of the completeness, of the timeless eternal, and therefore what is realised in him has no meaning for him. This detachment, *absolute detachment to both the denials and assertions of*

life, is what makes the Jivan Mukta different from the spiritual personalities who are conscious of the ends and their powers.

The Jivan Mukta, therefore, is not active in the usual sense. He merely exhausts his residual Karma, of which he is not strictly conscious, for he is no longer a person. Karma shapes itself through personality, when the sense of personality is lost. The Jivan Mukta cannot be held to be working out an end. For the idea of an end or a direction or of marching towards something which implies the reality of time and progress has no meaning for the Jivan Mukta. He lives in the eternal present, for he sees the complete. The time-sense has no value for him. Hence the Jivan Mukta has no personality in the true sense of the word. Personality is the creation

of time. It is false. It is at least concomitant with it. The Jivan Mukta transcends time. Evolution or progress has, therefore, no meaning for him. He sees the Truth eternal. He feels he is the Truth transcendental. When the Truth has been fully grasped, the adept can live any form of life, since his realisation of Truth puts him on a vantage ground of complete freedom. This freedom is fostered in detachment to active seeking or passive withdrawal. Both are impellings of a restricted life, but the Jivan Mukta is beyond such restriction. The autonomy he enjoys is not the restricted autonomy of will, or freedom of a person in a community of persons. It is the autonomy of knowledge. It is freedom from the illusions of personality, Karma and striving, which endows the adept with Peace attending the fullness of Life and Light.

(concluded)

## SAT SANGATWAM OR GOOD COMPANY

By

M. Gnanasambandam, B.A.

सत्संगत्वे निःसंगत्वं निःसंगत्वे निर्मोहत्वम् ।

निर्मोहत्वे निश्चलतत्वं निश्चलतत्वे जीवन्मुक्तिः॥

SO sang the illustrious Sankara in sublime verse regarding the glorious effects of good company. The truth is told by him that before one can appreciate solitude, one must previously have had the experience of good company. To train the vacillating mind to remain steady the company of wise and good men is strongly urged. Without the mental discipline and outlook which is the result of pure and good company no enjoyment is at all possible in solitude. According to Sankara, Sat Sangatwam will pave the way for Nis-

sangatwam. Direct effort at accomplishing Nisangatwam will be premature and abortive. This is proved by the sad experience of (Robinson Crusoe) Alexander Selkirk in his lonely island when he gave vent to his feelings thus:

"O Solitude! where are the charms  
That sages have seen in thy face?  
Better dwell in the midst of alarms  
Than reign in this horrible place."

Sat Sangatwam is the basic foundation upon which the superstructure of Nisangatwam can be securely built. Good books, no less than good men, breathe good thoughts and so constitute good company. The mind which

is purified and steadied by good company will be able to rejoice both in company and in solitude but the impure and unsteady mind precipitates itself into the region of suspicion and distrust and feels horror and dismay even before it becomes aware of its surroundings.

It is not what we like that we should adore, but it is rather, that which we would naturally adore is what we should rightly like. Adoration must indicate and encourage liking and not *vice versa*. We can get anything in the world such as fame, name, power or position but we cannot expect to have permanent good company except by God's grace and our own eagerness and earnestness. As we adore and love the good people we must also become like unto them. We should like good men because we really adore them. The liking to them must grow with the sense of adoration. A man likes money but that is no reason why he should adore it; but a man adores God and it is quite right that he must also like God. Therefore the sense of adoration which precedes the sense of liking rightly indicates and points to the ideal while the sense of liking unsupported by the sense of adoration falls short of the ideal. A man who adores God reaches the ideal while he who adores money fails. The true test of the excellence of a thing is its power to compel our sense of adoration first. The enduring effect produced in us by Sat Sangatwam is the realisation that our happiness flows from within and is not thrust from without. The Sadhus lead us to a genuine knowledge of the Sat or Real in us and when this consciousness is awakened in us, we reach a stage where outer environments fail to affect us. To illustrate materially the part which the Sadhus play when they come in touch with ordinary men, let us take the case of a gas light. In that light which is

kept up by kerosine oil, contact with the flame of spirit (corresponding to Sat Sangam) is in the first instance essential before the kerosine oil is converted into the gas which becomes the means of shedding powerful light all around.

One important lesson we learn from real Sadhus is that we cannot serve God and Mammon simultaneously. That is why Jesus said, "It is far easier for a camel to enter the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God." Good people expect nothing from others. They freely give but they will not receive. They are like roses and jasmines demanding nothing for their beautiful service. These flowers yield their best to you and after doing so wither before your very eyes. Is there not a very close resemblance between them and the messengers of God who are really the flowers of humanity? Just as the blooming flowers wither and fade in our very presence so the messengers of God meet death after delivering their sweet messages of love and harmony to the world in which they are born. The plants and creepers producing these charming flowers laboriously basked in the sun and stood the rain and wind for months before the flowers came out. It is a grim truth that there is no realisation without sacrifice. Success marches on the broken limbs of dying soldiers in battles. There is no smooth and soft road to realisation. What untold sacrifices were for instance made by Swami Vivekananda before he was able to spiritualise his vast and perhaps unbelieving hearers? Nature supplies many good lessons if we have eyes to see and ears to hear. Sat Sangatwam shapes and consolidates our sense of love and devotion and teaches us the Truth which ever abides. Let us yearn and seek for Sat Sangatwam and imbibe all the good things it can confer on us.

## WORSHIP WITH SAMENESS OF VISION

By S. N. Suta

ONE of the most interesting portions of the Bhagavata is that which deals with the teachings of Kapila. Kapila, the father of the Sankhya system—which in its Niriswara form explains Samsara (round of births and deaths) and its conquest without positing a God—is, according to the author of the Bhagavata, the Lord Himself incarnated as the son of Kardama Prajapati and Devahuti for giving a clear conception of the Tatwas, and thereby enabling spiritual aspirants to attain freedom from all limitations. We are told that when Kardama took to the path of the Paramahansas, Devahuti, in obedience to her husband's instructions, approached the Divine Child and requested Him to give her spiritual advice. Kapila accordingly began a discourse on the Tatwas which, as presented in the Bhagavata, no doubt retain the Sankhya form, but as a matter of fact have been made to take a complete Vedantic turn by the introduction of the Supreme Lord's energy at every step in the modification of Prakriti. Kapila is next shown as describing to His mother in great detail the path of Bhakti Yoga characterised by meditation on the glorious form of the Lord—a portion which will amply repay careful reading.

What we wish to emphasise here, however, is the very next portion which deals with shrines and image worship (मद्विषयदर्शन-स्पर्श-पूजा-स्तुत्यादि). Temples as we understand them at the present day were not important, much less inevitable, factors in the scheme of worship prevalent among the ancients; yet

what the Bhagavata lays down as the mental requisites for any worshipper of images cannot certainly fail to hold good in the case of the temple-worshippers of our own time.

Says Kapila to Devahuti :

अहं सर्वेषु भूतेषु भूतात्माऽवस्थितः सदा ।  
तमवज्ञाय मां मर्त्यः कुरुतेऽर्चाविडम्बनम् ॥

"I am ever existing in all beings as their very soul, but man neglects Me so present and makes a sham of worshipping images." Lest people should interpret this to mean a wholesale damping of all image worship, one commentator says: अनिन्ये निन्दा निन्दयितुं न प्रवर्तते, किंतु विषेयं स्तोतुं :—This condemnation of something which does not deserve it is meant not as mere condemnation, but as a means of extolling what ought to be done. And what ought to be done is explained subsequently. Meanwhile more verses are given to show the folly of most worshippers in failing to remove from their minds all Bheda Buddhi or notions of various invidious distinctions. "He who foolishly neglects Me," says Kapila, "the Supreme Ruler and Atman present in all beings, and worships images, is really throwing his offering into ashes"—

यो मां सर्वेषु भूतेषु सन्तमात्मानमीश्वरम् ।  
हित्वाऽर्चायते मौढ्यात् भस्मन्येव जुहोति सः॥

The expression 'neglects' is rather mild, hence stronger one are used. We read, "Santi (the calmness or serenity of Freedom) is not attained by the mind of that man who hates Me while present in the bodies of other beings, and who, proud of his understanding,

looks upon Me with an eye of difference and cherishes enmity towards other beings"—

द्विषतः परकाये मां मानिनो भिन्नदर्शिनः ।

भूतेषु ब्रह्मैरस्य न मनः शान्तिमृच्छति ॥

Positive danger too is indicated, and special attention drawn in the succeeding verse which says, "I am not pleased with that worshipper who scorns other beings, although his worship may be accompanied with the various prescribed articles"—

अहमुच्चार्यैर्द्वैतैः क्रियोत्पन्नयाऽनघे ।

नैव तुष्येऽर्चितोऽर्चायां भूतप्राभावमानिनः ॥

Much worse things are in store for the person who makes the least difference between himself and 'another', for the Lord who is in the form of Death will cause him great fear and keep him still in Samsara (which every devout Hindu yearns to transcend)—

आत्मनश्च परस्यापि यः करोत्यन्तरोदरम् ।

तस्य भिन्नदृशो मृत्युर्विदधे भयमुत्पन्नम् ॥

What then is the correct attitude which must accompany worship—for the matter of that, any activity of ours—so that not only may evil not happen, but positive good may result? Says Kapila :

अयं मां सर्वभूतेषु भूतात्मानं कृतालयम् ।

अर्ह्येद्दानमानाभ्यां मैत्र्याऽभिन्नेन चक्षुषा ॥

—"With love and an equal eye, rooting out all notions of difference, make charitable gifts and perform respectful acts, and thereby worship Me who have taken up My abode in all hearts as their inner Ruler."

One should also mentally (not by outward signs merely) bow down to all beings, holding them in high regard with the conviction that the glorious Supreme Lord has entered into the individual beings as their inner Ruler"—

मनसैतानि भूतानि प्रणमेन् बहुमानयन् ।

ईश्वरो जीवकलया प्रविष्टो भगवानिति ॥

A faithful practice of this instruction would have ushered in a democracy surpassing any that the modern world can show.

The Upanishads and philosophical speculations which aim directly at the destruction of Bheda Buddhi may have remained, either by the natural unfitness of the mind or through the compulsion of others, beyond the grasp of many in the past. But no kind of objection can now be raised with regard to works like the Bhagavata which were composed by sages of "unerring vision" for the enlightenment of people of 'all Varnas and Ashramas' (सर्ववर्णाश्रमाणां यदर्थे हितं त्रयोषट्क्).

Bheda Buddhi, which causes excessive clinging to one's interest at the expense of even the most elementary rights of the rest of humanity, is the greatest obstacle in the path of progress, individual as well as collective. Time was when the injustice of some groups monopolising temples and similar institutions and shutting out other groups from every chance of spiritual advancement through such means, did not sufficiently dawn upon the public mind. But now, as it has not only dawned but has even mounted high in the sky, is it not our bounden duty to make one supreme effort to wipe out such invidious distinctions and prevent our well-meant offerings from getting deposited "in the ashes" instead of in the holy fire? Or shall we refuse to change, priding ourselves on the possession of latent divinity, and to our eternal shame wait till government legislation, the policeman and the court of law will force us to acknowledge that same divinity in others grudgingly, tremblingly, and in a manner least creditable to our reason, or piety or fellow-feeling?

# MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

VAITATHYA PRAKARANA

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

After a determination of the existence and nature of the rope and non-existence of anything besides it, all superimpositions disappear. Similarly, the determination of the real nature of Atman (is the requisite for the disappearance of all superimpositions on it). (18)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

When one makes certain that there is only a rope, all the superimpositions such as a snake, etc. (on it) will come to an end. The non-duality of the rope is also established. Similarly, from the teaching of the scriptures (Sastras) such as "not this, not that" one gets to know that Atman is devoid of all relation to the phenomenal world (Samsara): from such an experience which is as clear as the light of the sun, the realisation of (the nature of) Atman comes. The Upanishad texts confirming this knowledge are the following: "All this is Atman" (Ch. Up.): "The Atman is devoid of a beginning, an end, an interior or an exterior" (Mund. Up.): "He is both without and within and has no origin" (Mund. Up.): "He is undecaying and deathless and Fearless" (Brih. Up.): and "He is one without a second" (Ch. Up.).

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

(On this Atman) are superimposed numberless objects beginning with

Prana (life-force). This (superimposition) is the Maya of that Lord (Atman). From this (Maya) He Himself is deceived. (19)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

If you ask, "If the truth is that Atman alone is real, how comes it that innumerable objects like Prana (life-force) are superimposed on it?", (we reply), listen: This superimposition is the Maya of the Lord (Atman) (Maya is the wrong knowledge or belief that a non-existent thing exists). Just as a magician (or juggler) makes the clear sky appear as if it was full of trees having leaves and flowers, so also here the Lord (Atman) by his Maya (makes the phenomenal world appear), and is deceived by it Himself. That is to say, He looks as if he were deceived. (Lord Sri Krishna says) in Gita, "My Maya is hard to surmount."

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

The knowers of Prana call it Prana. Knowers of the elements call it the Elements. Knowers of Gunas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) call it Gunas. Knowers of Tattvas call it the Tattvas. (20)

Knowers of Padas (feet or quarters) call it Padas. Knowers of objects call it objects. Knowers of the words (such as Svarga, etc.) call it the worlds and knowers of

Deities (such as Indra) call it the Deity. (21)

Knowers of Vedas call it Veda. Knowers of sacrifice call it sacrifice. Knowers (of Atman) as enjoyer, know it as the enjoyer. Knowers of the objects (enjoyed) call it the object of enjoyment. (22)

Knowers of the subtle call it the subtle ; knowers of the gross know it as the gross ; knowers of form know it as having form ; knowers of the formless, call it the formless. (23)

Knowers of time call it Time ; knowers of space call it space. Knowers of sciences (such as astrology, alchemy, etc.) call it science. Knowers of Bhuvanas (the 14 worlds of the Hindus) call it Bhuvanas. (24)

Knowers of mind call it mind ; knowers of Buddhi call it Buddhi ; knowers of Chitta (memory) call it Chitta ; knowers of Dharma and Adharma (right or wrong) (or merit or demerit) call it Dharma and Adharma. (25)

Some (Samkhyas) conceive it as the 25th. Others (followers of Yoga) think it to be the 26th. Some (Pasupatas) think it to be the 31st. Others believe it to be numberless. (26)

Knowers of people call it people ; knowers of Asramas (such as Brahmacharya, etc.) call it Asrama. Knowers of Linga (Grammarians) call it the male, the female and the neuter. Others take it to be the higher and lower Brahman. (27)

Those that believe in creation, call it creation. Believers in dis-

solution, call it dissolution; believers in sustenance call it sustenance. In fact all these (above named) are always superimposed on Atman. (28)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

Prana is the same as Pragna and the root-cause. All the other things (mentioned) ending with "sustenance" and all the other phenomena in the universe, are produced (that is, superimposed) by him, just as the snake and other things are superimposed on the rope. The final purport is, that all these distinctive things have been superimposed on the distinctionless (that is, non-dual) Atman, by reason of wrong knowledge, due to the non-determination of the true nature of Atman. As no useful purpose is served by describing in detail the various things, beginning with Prana, such an attempt has not been made.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

That object which has been pointed out to him (as being Atman, by a teacher or a well-wisher), that he comes to know. That object becoming one with the knower, protects him. That conception comes to take hold of him. (29)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

What is the good of any more details? When anything such as Prana, mentioned above, or any other object not mentioned, has been pointed out to a person, by a teacher (Acharya) or a trustworthy well-wisher (Apta) as the Reality (Tattva), that person comes to think of that object as his own self (that is, superimposing on his own Atman something which has no real existence) or as belonging to himself (that is, imputing a relation which does-

not exist). That object becomes to him the reality (Tattva) and protects him by surrounding him on all sides (that is, prevents him from having any other thought or conviction). He comes to be attached to that object in the belief that it is Tattva. By saying that "the conception takes hold of him", we mean that the object becomes identified with his self.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

(The Atman) apart from whom there are no objects, appears as distinct objects. He who understands Atman as he really is, may undoubtedly superimpose anything on Atman. (30)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

Though Atman is the inseparable basis for the superimposition of Prana and other objects, the ignorant people convince themselves that Atman is something separate from the objects, just as the snake is believed to be separate from the rope. To enlightened people, however, Prana and other things do not exist apart from the rope. The authority for this, is the statement in Brih. Up. "All this, is this Atman". He who knows conclusively that apart from Atman, there can be no superimposed object, just as there can be no superimposed snake without the rope, and that Atman alone remains without any superimposition, that man devoid of all doubts, may and can determine that such and such is the meaning of the particular portion of the Veda and that such is the meaning of another portion. He who has no right knowledge of Atman, cannot understand the truth of the Vedas properly. There is a saying of Manu to the effect that "whoever has no proper knowledge of the nature of Atman, cannot derive any benefit from his actions."

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

The wise have seen from the Vedanta scriptures, that the universe is as much an appearance as a dream or magic or castle-in-the air. (31)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

The duality which has been shown to be unreal on the authority of reason, is now shown to be unreal on the authority of Vedanta statements. Though dream and Maya have been proved to have no reality, ignorant people consider them as having reality. Just as a city-in the air, with rows of well furnished shops, houses and palaces, full of people both male and female, going about their business, appears for a moment and vanishes the next ; and just as both dream and magic are seen to be unreal, the whole of the dual universe is seen to have no reality. To the question as to where this is stated, we reply that the following Vedanta quotations,—"Here there is no manifoldness" (Br. Up.) : "Indra the magician" (appears in various forms) (Br. Up.) : "All this was Atman in the beginning" (Ait. Up.) : "This was Brahman in the beginning" (Br. Up.) : "Fear arises from duality" (Br. Up.) : "But there is no duality" (Br. Up.) : "When everything becomes to him his own Atman" (who can see whom and by what ? (Br. Up.) :—and other texts also (speak to the same effect). By "the wise" is meant those learned men who can see into the real nature of the thing. The authority for this is the following verse from Vyasa Smṛiti. (The wise consider duality) "as unreal as a crack in the ground seen in darkness, as an air bubble in rain-water, as constantly liable to destruction, as having no bliss and as non-existing after destruction."

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE KATHOPANISHAD AND THE GITA:** By Prof. D. S. Sarma, Presidency College, Madras; published by M. R. Seshan, Publisher, Triplicane, Madras; Pages 99: Price Rs. 1.

Among the recent publications of Sanskrit texts bearing on the religion and philosophy of the Hindus, Prof. Sarma's edition of the Kathopanishad seems to be one of the most important. The text is regarded by Western scholars as a perfect specimen of the mystic philosophy of the ancient Hindus and it embodies the cream of the Upanishadic teachings. As a student of Sanskrit, as a professor of English, but as one who has been trying to translate into his own life the ancient Hindu ideal, Professor Sarma is eminently qualified for the task of editing the text with introduction, translation and notes.

The Introduction from which is derived the title of the edition is, as Professor Sarma holds, an important one; for here an attempt is made to synthesise the Upanishad and the Gita by an analysis of both. It is an interesting thesis that he has elaborated that the Gita has for its source the Kathopanishad, and it is interesting reading. But a critical student must raise the question: cannot the Gita be the source of the Kathopanishad? Apart from this, Prof. Max Muller has suggested—and this is noted by Prof. Sir S. Radhakrishnan—that the Kathopanishad has different strata in it and may not be an original Upanishad in the strict sense of the term. Again, the closing verses of Chapter III necessarily raise the authenticity of the succeeding chapters. There is also the question of differences in readings. While we are thankful to the author for the Appendix which gives us the story of Nachiketas as found in the Taittiriya Brahmana we feel that a consideration of these general and textual problems would have added considerably to the value of the edition.

The translation is not always strictly scientific; but it is very readable and it may well be pronounced to be a success, because it enables the general reader to feel, in some measure at least, the inner pulse of the original. It is clear that the author has been very critical in the choice of language and in the understanding of the text and he has tried to bring out the idea that Sri Sankara finds in it. But one is afraid that he has sometimes been over-critical. Consider the rendering of the word *para*, occurring in 3-10: we are afraid that the idea of Sri Sankara is not conveyed by the term *beyond*. Again, the interpretation of the expression *matprosratah* in 1-11 and the rendering of the word *vyatratat* in 4-1, do not strike us as very appropriate. Prof. Sarma recognises the difficulty of interpreting the verse Janamyahamiti (2-10); but his explanation and interpretation do not tend to elucidate the text better. The translation of the verse 2-21 does not bring out the essential point stressed by Sri Sankara, while the charge levelled at him, notes page 86, appears to us to be rather clumsy. We do not wish to further elaborate this point; but enough, we believe, has been said to show that it is possible to differ from Prof. Sarma on many topics, even essential ones. But here lies one aspect of the greatest of our sacred texts. They do not make the same impression on all alike: this differs according as the Adhikari differs. Naturally therefore differences of opinion do not in any way belittle the value of the work; they only elucidate the essential nature of these and such other texts.

Barring a few misprints and typographical errors and the absence of diacritics, the volume is very neatly printed and got up. It is a handy edition and serves as a good introduction to the study of the ancient Hindu philosophy.

Prof. K. RAMA PISHAROTI, M.A.

NEO HINDUISM : By Mr. D. V. Athalye, Published by D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co., Kitab Mahal, Hornby Road, Bombay. Price Rs. 5-8-0. Pages 220.

There is a special appropriateness as well as significance in the title that the author has chosen for this excellent book; for the Swami Vivekananda, whose teachings Mr. Athalye tries to expound herein, was responsible more than any other single individual for the great transformation that has come over Hinduism in the last few decades. At the time when the Swami appeared Hinduism was at its lowest ebb. On the one hand its orthodox champions discredited its name by their narrow interpretation of the Dharma—an interpretation that stood in violent opposition to modern thought, and the progressive and humanistic tendencies associated with it. On the other its enemies were trying their best to blow up its ancient structure by their misrepresentation of its teachings calculated to discredit it in the eye of its followers and the world at large. It was the life-work of the Swami to remove the misconceptions arising from this twofold distortion of the Hindu religion and present its teachings in their pristine purity as a rational system of thought that was quite consistent with science, patriotism and humanitarian ideals. This liberal interpretation by the Swami has now been so widely accepted in modern India that to identify his teachings with Neo-Hinduism is in no way an incorrect use of language.

Beginning with a biographical sketch Mr. Athalye gives an exhaustive treatment of the Swami's teachings in the nine succeeding chapters with appropriate headings. In the second chapter entitled "Thoughts on Hinduism in General" we are told in what respects Hinduism requires adjustment today, how the diverse philosophical interpretations of Hindu scriptures can be unified, what constitutes the common principles running through all the sects of Hinduism, and in what respects it stands as a unique system of spiritual discipline and metaphysical construction. The next four chapters

are devoted to the four Yogas—Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga and Raja Yoga. These are the four paths that the Hindu scriptures set forth for the practical guidance of spiritual aspirants. Mr. Athalye gives their salient features as expounded by the Swami in his famous series of lectures on the Yogas. The chapter on Practical Vedanta is perhaps the most important and instructive section in the book; for the original contribution of the Swami to modern Hinduism consists in his application of the highest teachings of Vedanta to all the problems of everyday life. Mr. Athalye has shown with appropriate quotations from the Swami's works, how the Vedantic doctrine of the Atman is the only sound basis of self-reliance—a quality unavoidable for success in life—how its ideals of non-attachment and dispassionateness are conducive not only to mental peace but even to the highest type of ability met with in the world, and how its doctrine of seeing God in everything is the only solution for many of the grave problems facing society today in India as well as abroad. Mr. Athalye concludes his discussion on practical Vedanta with the pregnant words: "On the individual side practical Vedanta means the destruction of privileges and establishment of equality. Both in individual sense as well as in social sense practical Vedanta means more and more the perception and observance of unity all round." In the eighth chapter Mr. Athalye has given a connected account of the Swami's views on other religions of India—Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. The last two chapters are devoted to the Swami's views on the social reform movement of his days and to his ideal of patriotism in which his love of country blended in harmony with his desire for the spiritual regeneration of mankind.

From this brief account the importance of Mr. Athalye's book in a study of modern Hinduism as expounded by its best representative will be quite evident. The works of the Swami are today available to the English reading public in seven bulky volumes, but the very size of the literature will dissuade

busy man of the world from starting on a study of it in the original. Mr. Athalye's work is invaluable to people of this kind, who are none the less anxious to know something authentic about the trend of Modern Hindu thought. In brief compass he has dealt with all aspects of the Swami's teachings. The treatment is quite faithful to the spirit of the Swami's works, and the elaborate quotations with which the Volume is interspersed everywhere add to its authenticity without in any way marring the beauty and general effect of the book. Mr. Athalye is a talented writer, his style being simple and forceful, and this together with his enthusiasm for the message of the Swami makes the book attractive from the literary point of view also. The general reader who wants to know what Modern Hinduism is in a nutshell can find no better volume for his purpose.

TWO DIALOGUES OF PLATO: *Published by the Shrine of Wisdom, London. Pages 186. Price Sh. 4-6 Net.*

This volume is "a new translation" of the First Alcibiades and The Meno, brought out by the Editors of the Shrine of Wisdom. Politics nowadays looms large in the public eye, and it is becoming the cherished ambition of all educated young men to have a 'voice' as well as a 'hand' in the administration of the country. To all such the conversation between Socrates and Alcibiades will undoubtedly have a living interest. Alcibiades, feeling proud of his ancestry, good looks and education, believes he is competent to offer advice to the Athenians regarding peace, war and such other weighty matters. Socrates, the 'lover,' in his inimitable fashion drives him back from point to point and finally makes him realise his extreme 'ignorance,' his 'most shameful lack of culture,' which was thus making him rush into politics before he had been taught. It is rather hard to tell whether any would-be political leader of the present day would err so grievously as Alcibiades who thought, besides, that his 'contest' was with the 'untrained men' of the Assembly and naturally concluded that there was no need for him to practise or learn

anything. Any way, Socrates' warning—"Train yourself, my dear sir, and engage in politics when you have learnt what is necessary", i.e., the nature of his own self—would be felt by all to carry with it a living freshness, although centuries have passed since it was first uttered. The second dialogue enters directly into a discussion of what virtue is. This virtue, we are shown, is not attained by nature, nor through man's efforts alone. Neither can it be 'taught'. The soul possesses the latent knowledge of virtue, as of all other things, through the 'innate ideas' and it only needs to "educe these" to become actually conscious of that knowledge. The publishers in our opinion have indeed done a signal service by bringing out these two dialogues at a time when our welfare has come to rest more than ever upon the faithful practice of the lessons they contain.

SACRED MOMENTS:—*Compiled and published by Ram B. Motwani, Lalkachhri, Larkana, Sind. Pages 42. Price Annas 8.*

This is a neatly got up little volume containing sublime sayings of master minds. Each day of the year has been given one saying consisting of a single sentence and each month is wound up with an extra passage from the great teachers. If made a companion for all spare moments, this book will exert a silent influence upon the mind and help to make it healthier, purer and nobler in the long run. The dedication is to Mr. Jamshed N. R. Mehta, the Parsi philanthropist, an embodiment of the ideal of Daridra Narayana Seva.

ORIGINAL PROGRAMME OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: *By H. P. Blavatsky. Published from the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar.*

When the Theosophical Society and its President, Mr. Olcott, were very badly accused by Mr. Mohini M. Chatterji and Mr. A. Gebhard, Madame Blavatsky made a dignified and able defence which is printed in this volume under the heading "The Original Programme". The full text of the accusation is given in an appendix. The last section of the book contains the

Memorandum of the Esoteric Section, drawn up by Blavatsky herself. Even non-theosophists will find many statements valuable and suggestive—as for example: "The superficial and inattentive habits of thought engendered by Western civilisation shall be given up" and "Students are required to practise the habit of careful and constant concentration of mind upon every duty and act in life."

**CHELEDER GAN OR THE SONGS OF BOYS (IN BENGALI):** By Swami Chandikananda. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Wari Po, Dacca, Bengal. Price Annas 3.

The author of this small booklet has made an attempt to compose songs in simple and homely Bengali and set them to music in different tunes (Ragams). The songs are all devotional and most of them deal with the two aspects (terrible and loving) of the Universal Mother. The rest relate to Lord Sri Krishna and Ramachandra.

The composition is original and stands as a type by itself, quite different from songs of its kind both ancient and modern. A work of this type will supply a great want in Bengali and certainly be useful to those who are interested in music. The get up of the book is very decent and attractive. Besides the present book the Swami has brought out three more books of songs of which two are in Assamese language and the third in Bengali.

**SRI RAMAKRISHNA UPADESA (IN GUJARATI):** Published by Swami Bhaveshananda, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Rajkot, Kathiawar. Pages 152. Price Annas 4.

This is a free translation of the Bengali book of the same name. The language is simple, homely and charming, and we hope that this handy volume will help to spread among our Gujarati-speaking brethren the spiritual teachings of the Saint of Dakshinamur. We are sure that no one will find the price too high.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Opening of a New Students' Home

Ever since the Mysore branch of the Ramakrishna Math was started seven years ago, its work has been mainly among the students. Religious classes are being held by the members of the Ashrama in the hostels and educational institutions of the city. Many friends of the Ashrama have often urged the need for a Students' Home conducted by the Ashrama to which they could send their children, being confident that they would make the most satisfactory progress under proper supervision. Thanks to the generous gift of a building very near the Ashrama at Vontikoppal by Mr. M. S. Rangacharya, Advocate, Mysore, and thanks also to the donations of Rs. 1 000 by Mr. M. S. Manjappa Gowda of Shimoga and Rs. 100 by Mr. D. R. Manappa, also of Shimoga, for the above purpose, the Ashrama was able to start the Home on Monday, the 20th June 1932. The

opening ceremony was conducted in the morning with the installation of Sri Ramakrishna and Goddess Saraswati in the Home shrine followed by Puja, Homa, devotional music and Vedic chanting. The function was attended by many friends. In the evening there was a meeting attended by about two hundred elite of the city. Swami Srivasananda, who was mainly responsible for starting the Sri Ramakrishna Maths at Bangalore and Mysore before, presided over the function. The Swami spoke of the ideals of such Students' Homes. The object of the Home is to give moral, religious, social, intellectual and physical training, laying stress on character formation and on the dignity of labour. The daily routine and the rules of the Home have been so framed as to realise the objects with which it has been started. After devotional music the pleasant function was brought to a close with Mangalarathi and distribution of Prasadam to the assembled citizens.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XIX]

DECEMBER, 1932

[No. 8

## HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।  
एतर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥  
तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।  
पाप्मानं प्रजहि हेनं ज्ञानविज्ञान नाशनम् ॥  
इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।  
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥  
एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।  
जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥

The senses, the mind and the intellect are said to be the abode of this (desire); through these, it deludes the embodied being by veiling his wisdom.

Therefore, O Scion of the Bharata race, controlling the senses at the outset, kill it—the sinful, the destroyer of knowledge and realisation.

The senses are said to be superior to the body; the mind is superior to the senses; the intellect is superior to the mind; and that which is superior to the intellect is the Atman.

Thus knowing Him Who is superior to the intellect, and restraining the self by the Self, destroy, O mighty-armed, that enemy, the unseizable foe in the form of desire.

BHAGAVAD GITA, CHAP. III.

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

(Continued from Page 244)

## SECOND CHAPTER

"Hear thou again My supreme word, the profoundest of all; because thou art dearly beloved of Me, therefore will I speak what is good to thee."

—GITA, xviii—64.

### *A Few Thoughts on Bhava, Samadhi and Visions*

IT will not be superfluous to say that before the advent of the Master, all the educated and uneducated people of Calcutta were completely in darkness regarding *Bhava*, *Samadhi* and the extraordinary visions and experiences of the spiritual realm. The illiterate masses, imbued with a feeling of awe and wonder, entertained a very queer conception with regard to all those things. The up-to-date educated people, on the other hand, threw themselves altogether into the drift of Godless foreign education and considered all those experiences to be absurd or born of mental derangement. The physical changes, brought about by *Bhava Samadhi* that occurs in the spiritual domain, would appear to them to be but the result of a fainting fit or a bodily disease. In modern times although circumstances have changed to a considerable extent, still there are very few persons who can rightly grasp

*Bhava* and the mystery of *Samadhi*. Moreover, in order to understand in the least the state of Sri Ramakrishna Deva's being in *Bhava Mukha*, a fairly broad knowledge of the theory of *Samadhi* is very essential. We shall therefore endeavour now to make the readers acquainted with some points in connection with this theme.

### *Samadhi not a Disease of the Brain*

What is not experienced by the common run of mankind is usually said to be 'abnormal.' But the subtle truths of the spiritual realm can never be perceived by ordinary gross human minds. For such perceptions special training in that line, as well as initiation and constant practices are necessary. All those extraordinary visions and realisations sanctify the aspirant day by day, infuse a fresh strength and a new spirit into him at all times and gradually entitle him to the attainment of eternal peace. Is it therefore rational to designate those experiences as abnormal? It must be admitted on all hands that every abnormal condition debilitates men and causes deterioration of intellect. But when the fruits of religious experiences are seen to

be of quite an opposite character, the causes also must be admitted to be totally different. So, all such occurrences can never be considered as the effects of brain disease or any other ailment.

*Spirituality and Eternal Peace  
obtainable through Samadhi alone*

The characteristic experiences in the spiritual path have ever been gained through such visions, etc. But until a man attains to the Nirvikalpa state of mind with all his mental modifications at a standstill and remains poised in Advaita-consciousness, he cannot be worthy of experiencing the everlasting spiritual bliss. As Sri Ramakrishna Deva used to say, "If one thorn has got its entrance, it is to be drawn out by means of another and at length both should be thrown off." Lack of God-consciousness has brought about this sort of worldliness. All these changeful perceptions of various forms and tastes are undermined by spiritual visions and realisations which again gradually elevate the human mind to the plane of Advaita-consciousness. Being in that state of mind man realises the true import of the declaration of the Vedic Seers—"That is Bliss itself"—and becomes truly blessed. Such is the process, and all the doctrines, experiences, visions etc., of the religious world lead men to that goal alone. Sree-mat Swami Vivekananda described these as milestones on the onward march of an aspirant towards the goal. So, let not the reader think

that the culmination of religious life is reached only when anybody visualises one or two forms of gods through a little predominance of a particular spiritual mood or by dint of meditation. If he does so, he will be committing a great blunder. And aspirants often do lose sight of the goal on account of being liable to such a gross error in the spiritual path. Being aimless, they grow partial in their views and become filled with jealousy and hatred towards one another. Getting deluded thus in their attempt to evince devotion towards God, they fall a victim to fanaticism and stubbornness. Such a defect on their part stands as a great obstacle in the path of devotion and has its origin in the lower propensities of the human mind.

*It is not that, without obtaining a Vision of Gods no Progress in the Spiritual Path can be made.*

Moreover, putting their faith in those visions many think that he who has not experienced such things is not religious at all. Religion and miracle-mongering appear to be the same to them. Impelled by such a tendency men, instead of growing in spirit, get enfeebled in every respect from day to day. That which does not bring about one-pointedness of mental faculties and strength of character, which does not enable men to stand on the firm ground of purity and defy the whole world for the sake of Truth, and led by which human beings, instead of being free from

desires day by day, get entangled more and more into diverse cravings for enjoyment,—is certainly outside the pale of religion. If experiences of extraordinary visions do not produce such wholesome changes in your life still, it must be understood that you are away from the spiritual realm and that such visions are consequences of mental derangement and have got no real worth. But if you find that you are gaining in strength even without having those metaphysical experiences, you must know that you are proceeding in the right path and that in course of time experiences of a genuine type will appear.

*Renunciation, Faith and Strength  
of Character the Signs of Spiritual  
Progress*

A certain friend\* of ours once grew very much impatient when he came to understand that many among the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna had been experiencing spiritual trances and that nothing of the sort had been occurring in his case although he had been paying visits to the Master for a long time. So with tears in his eyes he appeared before the Master one day and began to give vent to his inner feelings. At this Sri Ramakrishna Deva consoled him thus, "You are a big fool, I see. Do you think then that that is everything? Is that a very great acquisition? Know for certain that true renunciation and faith are of far greater importance than all this. Scarcely do we find such

things in the case of Narendra (Swami Vivekananda). Still, you see, what a spirit of sacrifice, faith, mental strength and devotion he has got!"

*The Higher Self and Pure  
Thoughts: Jivanmukta, Adhika-  
rika, or Iswarakoti and Jivakoti*

When the desires of an aspirant are curtailed by means of mental one-pointedness, strong faith and intense devotion, and when the time arrives for being established in the consciousness of oneness with God, then due to previous impressions, sometimes such holy ideas arise in the mind of some, as for example, "I shall do good to people and act in such a way as will lead to the happiness of many". Actuated by such a desire the aspirant becomes unable to remain in perfect Advaita-consciousness. Descending a bit from that higher mental plane he moves again in the region of I-ness and My-ness. But that I-ness is always based on a closer divine relation—the feeling of one's being a *servant* or a *child* or a *part* of the Lord. By that 'ego' the constant enjoyment of wealth and women is no longer possible. That 'ego' considers God to be the most substantive Being and does not hanker after the enjoyment of names and forms of this world. It voluntarily accepts only so much of sense-objects as will lead to the fulfilment of its aim or purpose. Those, who were bound souls in the beginning and have attained perfection afterwards

\* S. J. Gopalchandra Ghosh.

by means of spiritual practices and are spending the remaining part of their life in some sort of divine mood, are designated as "*Jivan-muktas*." Those, who are born with the consciousness of a certain relation with God and in this life have never been subject to the bondage of the world like ordinary persons, are described in the Scriptures as 'Adhikarika Souls',

'Iswarakoti', 'Nitya Mukta' (ever-free) etc. Then again, there is another class of aspirants who, after they attain to Advaita-consciousness, never come down to do good to the people at large either in this life or in the life hereafter. They are called 'Jiva-kotis' and we are told by our spiritual teacher that they are more in number.

## HINDUSTANI CULTURE—II

**I**N the last number we spoke of the rise and achievements of Hindustani Culture. In its palmy days it gave India an efficient administrative system and a successful military organisation, created a valuable historical literature and introduced an era of artistic activity which marked an epoch in the annals of man's quest after the beautiful. It also brought the larger part of India within its influence and sought to effect a political and cultural union of the diverse peoples inhabiting this country. But none the less it failed ultimately in the supreme task of national solidification of India, as later events proved it to be the case. For the fact remains that in the end a large section of people whom this culture sought to bring within its sway revolted against it, and brought about the disruption of the political structure that was sustaining it till then. And what is more, its failure is shown by nothing so remarkably as by its inability to create, after more than two centuries of undisturbed rule, something corresponding to the national sentiment that could successfully withstand the menace of foreign conquest which the country had to

face in later times. We shall therefore enquire into some of those features in the social and political life of Medieval India that led to the collapse of the Hindustani Culture

Although we may say that, ultimately speaking, irreconcilable social differences between the rulers and the ruled were responsible for the downfall of this culture, we have to look into the political condition of its declining period, if we are to gain a correct appreciation of the forces working for its downfall. For it was the political structure of the Mughal Empire that stood as its frame-work, and when that structure went to pieces, the culture too was bound to decay and cease to function as a living unity. The Mughal Empire sought to achieve a great purpose, a purpose that was the dream of all the statesmen of India before, *viz.*, the political unification of the country. The conquest and consolidation of Northern India had been achieved during the reign of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, but the Deccan and the extreme south still stood beyond the pale of Mughal rule. It was the cherished object of Aurangzeb to complete this work of political unification, but it

proved too hard a task for the resources of the Empire due to the natural difficulties involved in the task as well as other complications arising from Aurangzeb's unstatesmanlike policy in religious matters. Before the modern methods of transport had overcome the difficulties of communication between the North and the Deccan, the invasion of the South, and much more a continuous campaign there, were not much less difficult than the invasion of the North from the regions beyond the Himalayas. Hence when Aurangzeb started upon the conquest of the Deccan, he was starting upon an adventure fraught with tremendous difficulties. Yet with the help of the enormous resources at his disposal and his own consummate generalship, he could have achieved this difficult task had he been more of a statesman than a narrow-sighted bigot. In the conquest and consolidation of Northern India the liberal religious policy of the Mughals had served them in good stead. The two powerful political classes of Northern India were the Afghans and the Rajputs, and the Mughals wrested the country from the former with the co-operation of the latter. But in his conquest of the Deccan Aurangzeb had to face all the politically powerful sections of the Deccan with no allies to help him in the huge enterprise. What was more, his own kingdom in the North was in ferment because of his illiberal religious policy, and the imposition of the *Jizya* as a last resort to replenish his impoverished treasury had alienated his Hindu subjects. Thus with his own home in smouldering discontent, he had to face two powerful enemies, the Muslim kings of the Deccan and the more formidable Mahrattas whose new tactics of guerrilla warfare were as baffling as they were surprising to the

Mughals. For over twenty-five years Aurangzeb followed a policy of continuous warfare in a fruitless effort to subdue these enemies and in so doing exhausted the resources of the Empire. Without intervals of peace to recuperate and reconstruct, no policy of conquest involving such prolonged warfare can ultimately succeed, but Aurangzeb considered continued persistence superior to such a policy of cautious inactivity. The result was the collapse of the political frame-work that sustained the Hindustani culture.

The disastrous consequences of this quarter century of warfare on the economic resources of the country need some mention. We had stated before that the establishment of peace and order was the greatest justification of Mughal rule in the country. During the latter half of Aurangzeb's reign this peace—the sole justification of the Mughal Empire—no longer existed. Since Sivaji's time the Mahrattas harried the Empire from all quarters. They carried warfare into the very heart of the Empire, demanding *Chauth* from Mughal subjects, and plundering and destroying the towns and villages that did not pay the same. The Emperor's effort to suppress them was not only fruitless but also disastrous to the Empire in as far as it intensified the economic distress. His continuous warfare involving innumerable sieges destroyed trees in the forests and grass in the plains, and consequently had a most disastrous effect on agriculture and cattle-breeding. Several lakhs of imperial troops with ten times their number of camp-followers marched from one part of the Empire to another eating up the resources of the country and trampling upon all the crops on the way. When Aurangzeb retired from the Deccan after his last campaign "he left behind him the fields of the

provinces devoid of trees and bare of crops, their place being taken by the bones of men and beasts." The labouring populations suffered not only from violent capture, forced labour and starvation, but also from epidemics that were frequent during the campaigns. Even in the imperial camp the annual loss of life consisted of one lakh of men and three lakhs of horses, oxen, camels and elephants. As a result both the Government and the people became bankrupt. Financial exhaustion forced Aurangzeb to empty the vaults of Agra fort of the accumulated savings of his ancestors from Akbar onwards, thus utilising even the last resources of the Empire. Peasants on their part, finding agriculture unprofitable under the existing unsettled conditions of the country, took to highway robbery as the next best means of livelihood. What with Mahratta raiders and what with local brigands roads became unsafe, and commerce and along with it industries perished. Thus an Empire with even its last financial resources exhausted, its population reduced to the lowest taxable capacity, its roads rendered unsafe, its best talents wasted in fruitless warfare and its boundaries frequently encroached upon by powerful enemies, could no longer be an instrument of a vigorous and unifying culture. The political structure of the Mughal Empire was thus sinking into a hopeless state of dilapidation, and along with it the culture that rested on it too declined.

But the decline could have been arrested, and the political life of the country and, along with it, its cultural integrity preserved, had it not been for the vital defects in the social ideals of the governing classes. As the dominant people, the Muslims, we have said, were the active agents in the development

of the Hindustani culture. But they ultimately failed either to accommodate themselves harmoniously to Indian social conditions or to create a new political sense akin to modern nationalism that could fuse the diverse peoples into a unit in spite of religious differences. The liberal and far-sighted policy of Akbar, devoid as it was of all narrowness, could have achieved this task, had it been carried to its logical conclusion. But unfortunately his son and grandson, though they did not go back upon their great ancestor's policy, had neither the imagination nor the insight to go ahead, while his great grandson, Aurangzeb, actually reverted to the political principles of the Sultanate, thus undoing the work of three generations. The extreme piety of the Emperor made the country too hot for his non-Muslim subjects to live in. Schools of Hindu learning came to be broken up, and Hindu places of worship to be demolished. One had to shoulder extra fiscal burdens for the simple fault of remaining a Hindu, besides bearing a public badge of inferiority. This denial of social and political rights to the Hindus not only led to constant revolts that ultimately caused the disruption of the Empire, but also to the deterioration in intellect, organisation and economic resources of more than two-thirds of the imperial subjects.

This narrowness in ideals and outlook that characterised the imperial policy in later days was also shared by the governing classes in general. The Turks who formed the majority of the governing class among the Mughals were mainly a military people, with little talents for anything else except fighting. Their manhood was a naturally embodied army, and even their civilian ranks showed garrison manners. Lack of imagination and progressiveness are characteristic of such a race of

soldiers, and when a cultivated sense of conservatism sanctified by religious influences adds its strength to them, the effect can be nothing short of cultural degradation. This was what happened with the Muslims in India. Their peculiar position in the country and the attitude they came to adopt towards things indigenous led to their intellectual decline. Though they came originally from outside, large scale conversions, intermarriages and continued stay in the country had made them Indian in race and language. In fact the change that had come over them was so great that in the 17th and 18th centuries it was becoming increasingly difficult for them to absorb Muslims coming from outside India. But in spite of this Indianisation in various respects, they were artificially trying to maintain their foreign characteristics. Their sacred language was Arabic and cultural language Persian, while the language they spoke at home and in the camps was Hindustani. But they had a supreme contempt for this last, their mother tongue, and in fact produced no literature in it until late in the 18th century. Although they devoted all their energy to the cultivation of Persian and Arabic, few could gain sufficient command over these foreign languages as to produce any literature of note. The writings of Indian Muslims drew the contempt of born Persians and Amir Kuru, the best Persian poet of India, was considered only a third rate writer by critics of Persian poetry. This linguistic difficulty stood in the way of the higher intellectual achievements of Indian Muslims. To make matters worse orthodoxy taught them to be not of India though living in India, lest by taking too deep root in the soil they should imperil their soul. Thus as Sirkar has remarked, "The

Muslim in India was an intellectual exotic; he could not.....replenish his strength by coming into contact with his mother earth. He must not adapt himself to his environment. The Quranic precepts for the guidance of civil society and the regulation of human conduct were framed in a far-off age for a nomadic people. It was absurd, as a rationalist like Akbar argued, that they should be binding on men of the 17th century living in a country that had nothing in common with Arabia." This false sense of pride verging on bigotry made them assume a negligent, if not contemptuous, attitude not only to things indigenous, but also to foreign ideas other than their own. For example, though the Muslim rulers were convinced of the superior ability of Europeans in gun making and military organisation, they made no systematic efforts to study their methods or gain their technical skill except in so far as they employed mercenaries whenever they could. No one mastered European languages or went out to learn what Europe had to teach. In their contempt for everything foreign, characteristic of all decadent people, such an idea did not strike their mind. It is also surprising that there were very few interpreters in the imperial court, who were proficient in any western language. And what is more, we can very well imagine the absolute intellectual inertia of the times when we consider the fact that such a useful invention as the printing press, which the Portuguese had introduced in Goa at that time, did not attract the attention of our rulers or the people, and the country had to wait for a century more before it could receive the benefit of the printing press.

The Hindus too were in no way much better. When the Muslims ultimately failed in their work of buildin

up the Hindustani culture, the Hindus were not found fit to take up their place as the leaders of society. During the supremacy of the Mahrattas and the Sikhs the balance of political power was in favour of the Hindus, but the standard of culture that these powers rose to was much inferior to what prevailed among the Mughals in their heydays, and their political predominance therefore could not achieve what was left undone by the descendants of Akbar. The rise of the Sikh power, for example, meant only the establishment of the political predominance of a purely military class, while the Mahratta rule was vitiated by its close association with brigandage and rapacious exactions. Neither the court of Poona nor that of Lahore could rise to the level of artistic achievement and administrative ability reached by the court of Delhi; much less could they conceive, as Akbar did, of a broad and far-seeing policy that could weld the divergent elements of India's population into a united whole. The rise of these powers was more of sectarian rather than national importance. Even from the Hindu point of view the ultimate benefit of these revivals was in some respects questionable. If they strengthened the sense of self-respect among Hindus as a whole, they were quite barren of result in a matter of vital importance for the Hindus, *viz.*, the unification of the Hindu society. Often they resulted in the intensification of communal differences centering round rights to chant the Vedas, to wear the sacred thread and enter the temple, and the Government in Hindu States generally sided with orthodoxy as opposed to the lower classes clamouring for social rights. As an example may be pointed out that the Hindu revival

under the Peshwas, in spite of leading to the democratisation of Hindu society, led to the further suppression of the lower classes by the higher with State assistance, and to increase caste bickerings between sub-divisions of Deccan Brahmins, and the Brahmins and the Prabhus.

Thus in the 18th century, when the nations of Europe were forging ahead, India was passing through one of the darkest periods of her cultural as well as political life. Until the time of Ram Mohan Roy in the next century, not one original thinker arose in the country whose life and message could stand as a beacon light to the nation during the dreary days that followed the downfall of the Mughal State. The leading luminaries of the times were neither sages, nor thinkers nor far-seeing statesmen, but political adventurers and military chiefs. All prospects of the political unification of India vanished for the time being with the collapse of the Mughal Empire, and the country came to be divided into countless independent States, some of them big and others small, but all together presenting an excellent field for the machinations of Clives and Dupleix. Politics descended from the heights of a unifying constructive policy to the low level of selfish strifes and treacherous intrigues that ultimately led to the conquest of the whole country by a small body of merchants from the West. A redeeming feature was perhaps the absence of religious persecutions after the time of Aurangzeb save for occasional outbursts when a Bandah sought to avenge the wrongs of the Sikhs or a Tippu took to forcible conversions under a passing eccentric mood or as a political expediency for tightening his hold over newly conquered territories.

Thus the Hindustani culture reached its lowest ebb during this period. However great its ideals might have been in its palmy days, its degradation went unchecked until it culminated in foreign conquest. The influence of the thought and achievements of the outside world which the Muslims and Hindus sedulously avoided with a sense of proud disdain, was by force, as it were, brought to bear upon their life when the English established their supremacy in the country. With the influx of this new thought-current a spirit of self-criticism and a desire to compare notes with other peoples have begun to manifest in our national mind, and the modern revival of our cultural life is largely the result of this tendency. Yet the old spirit that did havoc in the past often cries out from its ashes when the

Muslim seeks to stand aside from India's national life and enter into alliance with Persia or Afghanistan in a spirit of Pan-Islamism, or when the 'touchable' Hindu refuses to admit his 'untouchable' brethren into the temples and the orthodox Pundit condemns all modern innovations as the unavoidable calamities of the age of Kali. The Hindustani culture can revive and reach its full development only when all sections of Indians, Hindus as well as Muslims, identify their fortunes with the destinies of India, when the high and the low alike realise their common dignity as men irrespective of their position in life, and when our wise men shake off their ignorance born of pride and recognise that there is much to learn from the experiences of other nations.

## SANNYASA AS TAUGHT IN THE GITA

By

*Surendranath Mitra, M.A., B. Sc., L.T.*

**I**N the first chapter of the Gita we find Arjuna in the midst of the whirlwind of a serious conflict of duties, in the battle-field of Kurukshetra. He is strongly inclined to choose a life of passivity to escape the storm and stress he feels unable to overcome. This attitude of Arjuna typifies the contradiction between the life of action as a dutiful member of society and the life of renunciation of social duties—between the life of Karma and the life of Sannyasa. The rest of the Gita is occupied chiefly with the task of reconciling this contradiction. So far all the commentators of the Gita agree. But concerning the nature of the reconciliation offered by Sri Krishna, their views disagree. For the purpose of

this article their interpretations may be divided into two classes:—

(i) Those that assert that the life of Karma and the life of Sannyasa are to be adopted successively, the former being a purificatory stage preparatory to, and ultimately to be given up for the latter, so that Karma is the indirect and Karma-Sannyasa the direct means to the attainment of liberation (मुक्ति); and

(ii) Those that assert that the life of Karma is to be led in the spirit of Sannyasa, so that a synthetic blending of the two is a direct as well as the best method of reaching the ultimate goal of life. By the spirit of Sannyasa is to be meant the renunciation of the desires of enjoyment of all fruits of

actions for the individual (i.e., the embodied) self.

The first of the above two classes of interpretations I would call, for brevity, the doctrine of graduated selection, and the second the doctrine of synchronal combination.

Practically all the ancient commentaries of the Gita, that are extant, uphold the doctrine of graduated selection, although they all differ more or less on some vital points. Of course, there are a few commentators of the Bhakti School, e.g., Madhwacharya, according to whom it is immaterial whether one renounces the life of action or not after one's mind is purified enough by it to become an abode of an undivided love of personal God (सगुण ब्रह्म). The commentaries of these Acharyas I include in this class, since they consider action to be ultimately superfluous and *not necessary* for liberation. I include in this class the commentaries of those Acharyas of the Bhakti school, too, who dwindle the range of Karmas to ceremonial worship and to actions involved in supplying the barest needs of life; because such actions are rather an apology of Karma understood in the wide sense of the Gita to include all aspects of social duties, such as the political and the military.

Of all these commentaries that of Sankaracharya is the most ancient. But in this commentary Sankara takes great pains to combat a then existing class of commentators of the Gita who upheld the doctrine of synchronal combination (of the Bhashya of Sankara on the Gita II, 11, as an example).

Thus it is obvious that interpretations of the Gita based on the doctrine of synchronal combination were not only prevalent, but also commanded a

great influence, before the time of Sankara, although none of them have come down to us. So, if any attempt be now made to interpret the Gita from the standpoint of this doctrine, it should be considered rather as a revival than as an innovation. I propose to make such an attempt here, as much as it is possible for my limited humble capacity to make within the scope of this article. The pioneer-work in this direction has already been very successfully done, in his Gita Rahasya, by the singularly brilliant genius of the late Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who combined in his person a sound reasoning, a penetrating insight, and a profound scholarship in a remarkable degree, and brought the combination to bear upon a complete and comprehensive treatment of his subject.

In the beginning of the Gita we find Bhagavan Sri Krishna exhorting Arjuna to get up for fighting by shaking off his petty sentimental weakness (II, 2). Towards the end of the Gita, too, we find Arjuna come to himself and determined to fight, after having his doubts removed and his sentimental infatuation (मोह) destroyed by the grace of the Bhagavan (XVIII. 73). It is also described in the Mahabharata, of which the Gita is a part, that Arjuna did actually fight after this. Moreover, we find Sri Krishna repeatedly urging Arjuna to fight or act in the course of his teachings in the Gita (II. 18; III. 30; II. 33; IV. 15; XI. 34, etc.). The doctrine of Karmayoga as a means to the attainment of the *summum bonum* of life is a novel feature of the Gita, as it does not appear so clearly emphasised and developed in any other of our scriptures. The revival of the doctrine of Karmayoga is to be considered as the chief purpose of the teachings of the Gita, since, on Sri Krishna's own admission in the Gita, this most effec-

tive (अव्यय) and highest (उत्तम) Yoga had been lost for a long time (IV. 1-3). The Karmayoga has also been praised as superior to every other means (योग) to the realisation of the highest purpose of life (V. 2 ; VI. 46, etc.). And, again, the doctrine of Karmayoga has been supported by means of reason, too, in the Gita, by Sri Krishna, with a refutation of several counter-arguments. Thus, applying an old traditional exegetic device of the Mimāṃsakas, if we examine the beginning, the end, the repetition of a particular teaching, its novelty, its special purpose, its praise, and its rationale,\* we find that the main purpose of the teachings of Sri Krishna in the Gita was to urge Arjuna to fight, i.e., to teach him the Karma-yoga.

Although the commentators agree that the main purpose of Sri Krishna was to exhort Arjuna to fight, they contend that what was the best course for Arjuna is not the direct means to liberation. They maintain that Arjuna was not competent to practise the discipline meant to achieve the end directly.

Of all the reasons given for such an explanation, Sankara's being the strongest, to my mind, I propose to discuss this one here, in short. This reason is based on the assumption that action is impossible without the idea that the self is the enjoyer of its fruits as well as its agent, whereas the self is neither the one nor the other (अकर्ता and अभोक्ता). As it is impossible for any person to be actuated by two sets of contradictory ideas at one and the same time, the doctrine of graduated selection is the only one that is valid. (Of, for

example, Sankara Bhashya on the Gita II. 11).

Now, with the utmost deference to Sankara's extraordinary genius and the greatest reverence to his unique personality, which it is possible for me to command, I beg to raise a sincere objection to this argument.

As for enjoyments and sufferings—and every person, chained (बद्ध) or liberated (मुक्त), has his own share of them, due at least to the inertia of his previous actions that have already begun to take effect (प्रारब्ध)—the attitude which a Karmayogin has towards them has been described by Sri Krishna as one of indifference (e.g., in II. 38 of the Gita). And, regarding the Karma-yogin's attitude as an agent of actions, too, Bhagavan says that the Karma-yogin has no sense of the self being the agent (XVIII. 17 of the Gita). If it be said—as Sankara *does* say—that this saying of Bhagavan is applicable to the Karma-Sannyasin, and not to the Karmayogin, then the reason for this inference has to be stated, since this saying specially refers to the act of killing involved in the fight, in which Sri Krishna exhorts Arjuna to engage himself (हृत्वापि स इमंलोकान्न हति न निवृत्त्यते), and hence it plainly refers to Arjuna.

Now, Sannyasins, too, have got to perform actions involved in begging their food, sitting down, standing up walking about, hearing or reading the Scriptures, reasoning about them, contemplating on them (श्रवण, मनन, निदिध्यासन), and in various other activities necessarily associated with life. Truly has it been said by Sri Krishna that nobody can ever remain without action, all being compelled to work according to the Gunas of Prakriti

\* उपक्रमोपसंहारौ अभ्यासोऽपूर्वता फलम् ।

अर्थवादोपपत्ती च लिङ्गं तात्पर्यनिर्णये ॥

(Gita. III, 5)\*. Every action, in fact, proceeds from a will caused by a desire, which, in its turn, is caused by some knowledge. § This knowledge certainly includes the knowledge of the purpose to be achieved by action, of the method of performing it, of the impediments lying in the way, and also of the agent that has to perform it—whether the action be done by a Karma-Sannyasin or by anybody else. If knowledge of the real nature of the self (तत्त्वज्ञान) be necessarily inconsistent with actions it must be so in the case of the Karma-Sannyasin as well as in that of the Karmayogin. So far as I know, Sankara has not mentioned anything special in the action of the Karmayogin which must necessarily keep him ignorant about the true nature of the self. Rather he says that as soon as knowledge appears, the Karmayogin cannot but take to Karma-Sannyasa. But, what is the cause of the production of this knowledge? Certainly, it cannot be Karma-Sannyasa, since that has yet to come. If it be Karmayoga, then Karma-Sannyasa becomes superfluous,

\* न हि कश्चित् क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्म-  
कृत् । कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिर्जैर्गुणैः ॥

Sankara brings in the word अज्ञः (=ignorant) as understood after सर्वः (=all) and interprets this verse as applicable to the ignorant only, and not to the wise Karma-Sannyasins also. Sreedhara Swami, however, does not do so, and takes the कश्चित् to mean everybody, ignorant or wise (ज्ञान्यज्ञानी वा). The plain meaning of this verse as interpreted by Sreedhara seems, to my mind, to be quite consistent even with Sankara's view of action; since, Sankara, too, admits that even Sannyasins cannot avoid certain actions, such as begging, walking about etc. (भिच्छातनादिकम्).

ज्ञानजन्या भवेद्विच्छा इच्छाजन्या कृतिर्भवेत् ।

कृतिजन्या भवेच्चेष्टा चेष्टाजन्या क्रियोच्यते ॥

since knowledge alone is the direct means to the attainment of liberation, according to Sankara. If it be said that Karma-Sannyasa is necessary for maturing the knowledge (ज्ञानपरिपाक), as suggested by Sreedhara Swami, then is it not reasonable to say that the maturity of the knowledge is only a question of time and further operation of the very cause which produces it, viz., of Karma-yoga? Nowhere do we observe an effect produced by one cause and matured by another.

Perhaps it is the perception of this difficulty of the problem that led Vaohaspati Misra, in his Bhamati, to declare that the purification of the mind produced by Karmayoga consists in the desire for knowledge (ज्ञासा), and not in knowledge itself. According to him all the special actions of a Karmayogi must be abandoned as soon as an intense desire for knowledge is produced by them. Then taking to Karma-Sannyasa, the aspirant, through actions peculiar to Sannyasa, such as the hearing or study of Scriptures from a competent teacher, reasoning about them, and meditating on the conclusions arrived at (श्रवण, मनन, निदिध्यासन), acquires the knowledge which directly leads to liberation.

But, another Asharya (विवरणकार) of the Sankara-school objects to this view. He says that if Karma produces nothing but the desire for knowledge, then the production of knowledge becomes accidental, since it must depend on the condition of getting a competent teacher as well as on conditions favourable for Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana. Hence, according to him, the effect of Karma is not only a desire for knowledge, but also knowledge itself. But knowledge being impossible without the special actions of Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana, Karma-

Sannyasa is also necessary, so that the special duties of Karmayoga as well as those of Karma-Sannyasa jointly produce knowledge. The special function of Karma-Sannyasa, according to him, is the removal of the wandering of attention due to anger, passion, etc. (विक्षेपनिवृत्ति). But, in the stages of life other than that of Sannyasa (Brahmacharya, Garhasthya, and Vanaprastha) too, it is possible for some people to be free from the wandering of attention, and also to have Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana, in the intervals of their special duties. Hence, Karma-Sannyasa becomes superficial for them. To overcome this problem, Vivaranakara says that it is not the Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana practised in the intervals of duties, but practised incessantly, that can produce knowledge, and he supports his view by quoting from the Srutis, the passage "ब्रह्मसंस्थोऽमृतत्वमेति," which he interprets as follows: "He who is constantly occupied with things concerned with Brahman attains immortality."

Here, too, we can ask, "If actions like begging etc., do not produce any break in the occupation of the mind with thoughts about Brahman, in the case of a Karma-Sannyasin, why should the discharge of the special duties of a Karmayogin do it?" In the case of a Karmayogin, too, it is equally possible to make the ideals and thoughts derived from Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana underlie all his actions.

Moreover, in the case of classes, for whom the Ashrama of Sannyasa is supposed to be prohibited in the Sastras, Sankara himself admits the possibility of Jnana arising out of a hearing or study of the Itihasas (the Ramayana and the Mahabharata) and the Puranas. So we see that Sannyasa is not ultimately necessary for Tattwajñana, or,

for the matter of that, for Moksha, in their case, on Sankara's own admission.\*

The great geniuses like Janaka, Aswapati, Jaigisavya and Veda-Vyasa, and the Avatars like Sri Krishna, did not give up actions involved in the discharge of social duties, although they were liberated. But, according to Sankara (Brahma-Sutra-Bhashya, 3, 3, 32), they are a class by themselves, called the Adhikarikas. They, being endowed with special capacities of doing good to the world, go on acting for the good of the community of living souls in all the worlds (Lokasangraha), even in the liberated condition. So, we see here, too, in the case of the Adhikarikas, that activity for social good is not inconsistent with Jnana. Why is it not possible, then, for the same Jnana to underlie the activities of Karmayogins, too? Are the Karmayogins, who are not Adhikarikas, deprived of all capacity of doing good to society after attaining Jnana? Is it not possible for all Karmayogins to do good to society at least to the extent

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\* येषां पुनः पूर्वकृतसंस्कारवशात् विदुरधर्मव्याघ्रभृतीनां ज्ञानोत्पत्तिस्तेषां न शक्यते फलप्राप्तिः प्रतिबद्धं, ज्ञानस्यैकान्तिकफलत्वात् । श्रावयेच्चतुरोवर्णानिति चेतिहासपुराणाधिगमे चातुर्वर्ण्याधिकारस्मरणात् । वेदपूर्वकस्तु नास्त्यधिकारः शुद्धाणामितिस्थितम् । (Vedanta-Sutra-Sankara-Bhashyam I, 3.38):—"There is no obstacle to the production of Jnana in the case of Sudras, like Vidura, Dharmavyadha, etc., on account of the effect-producing power of actions performed in previous lives (as members of the twice-born classes); in such cases, the production of knowledge is inevitable. All the four Varnas have competency to be instructed in the Itihasas and the Puranas, according to the following text of the Sastras. 'Instruct all the four Varnas.' But, the Sudras cannot get knowledge through the study of the Vedas—that is what is enjoined in the Sastras."

that ignorant people may not grow more or less idle by misinterpreting and wrongly following their examples, if they leave the world? You should continue doing your duties as a member of society at least for the sake of *doing good to the worlds* (Gita: III. 20)—this is Sri Krishna's instruction to Arjuna, who was certainly not an Adhikarika Purusha, at least according to Sankara. Certainly, then, Lokasangraha is not a monopoly of the Adhikarikas! In the Gita, Sri Krishna says that the wise should go on working for the good of the worlds, remaining unattached to actions, just as the ignorant, attached to actions, do (Gita: III. 25). Here, Sri Krishna refers to all the wise irrespectively, and not to a particular class of them, *viz.*, the Adhikarikas.

Most people think, however, that there are some passages in the Gita which declare the superiority of graduated selection and cannot be explained from the point of view of synchronal combination without text-torturing. I can only invite such critics to study the explanations of these passages offered by the late Mr. B. G. Tilak in his Gita-Rahasya. In this short article I can but deal, in brief, only with a very few of them as typical cases.

First, let us take the passage, “दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियेगात्” (Gita, II. 49) which Sankara quotes so often to support his view. This passage clearly means that ‘Karma is far inferior to Jnanayoga.’ But Karma is not the same thing as Karmayoga. Karma, being bound up with an egoistic sense of agency (कर्तृत्वबुद्धि) as well as with a desire for individual gratification of the self (भोक्तृत्वबुद्धि or फलासक्ति), is certainly far inferior to Jnanayoga, which is free from these. But here there is no comparison of Jnanayoga with Karmayoga, which is equally free

from them. Jnanayoga and Karmayoga are both rooted in the same knowledge of the nature of the self, and Bhagavan advises Arjuna to adopt the element of knowledge only of Jnanayoga without renouncing his social duties. Hence in the next line he says “बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ”—take recourse to Jnana (not to Jnanayoga). The reason he adduces makes this meaning still clearer—“कृपणाः फलहेतवः”—those that desire fruits of action (for individual self-gratification) are pitiable, indeed. If the word Karma had meant Karmayoga here, this reason would have been quite inconsistent, since in Karmayoga, there is no desire for fruits of actions (for individual self-gratification), according to the teachings of Sri Krishna in the Gita.

Next, let us consider the passage “सर्वे कर्माखिलं पार्यं ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते” (Gita, IV. 33)—‘all actions, O Arjuna, culminate in Jnana.’ This does not mean that with the dawning of Jnana, the Karmayogin should take to Karma-Sannyasa. Rather, Arjuna is advised in the tenth verse from this one, which is in the same context with it, to get up for fighting as a Karmayogin (IV. 42). Jnana, when combined with social duties as well as with an undivided love of God, is the best of all disciplines, according to the teachings of Sri Krishna in the Gita—“तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते” (VII. 17).

Lastly, let us discuss the verse, “आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते । योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते” (Gita, VI. 3). This verse really means that one who aspires after becoming a Karmayogin can achieve his object by means of Karma or social duties (even if he is unable to abandon completely the egoistic sense of the agency of the self as well as the desire for individual self-gratification); but when he

becomes fully established in the Karmayoga, his peace of mind (due to complete freedom from egoism and desires, on account of perfection in Jnana) becomes the means (of doing his special duties of the same Karma-yoga)—that is, his duties are then performed with a perfect peace of mind. The interpretation of the word योगावस्थ in the verse as a Karma-Sannyasin, and not a Karma-Yogin, is a violent twisting of the meaning of the word. Clearly, in the first half of the verse,

Karma is spoken of as the means; but what is the end? Evidently, शान्ति (peace of mind) occurring in the second half. But, in the योगावस्थ state (i. e., in the state of perfected Karmayoga), this relation of means and end is reversed; and it is this that is mentioned in the second half of the verse. The terms of relation remain the same, the relation itself being reversed. Some may understand this reversal of relation better, if they compare it to reversible reactions in chemistry.

*(To be continued)*

## SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA, SANNYASIN AND TEACHER

*By Sister Devamata*

V.

SWAMI Ramakrishnananda was not a philanthropist, yet his whole life was consecrated to the service of humanity. He did not carry food to the hungry or clothe the naked, yet he gave to men with bountiful hand. His delight was in service and whatever he did glowed with the warmth of his own fervent spirit. I remember still the light that shone in his face as he moved about supervising the preparations for a festival day at the monastery, during which thousands of poor people were fed. Yet there was nothing in his manner which indicated that he thought he was "doing good." His attitude towards such forms of practical service was not the usual one. "Work for others is self-amelioration," was the way he defined it to me one day. Helping others was an opportunity for the giver and laid no weight of obligation on the one who was helped. "We need to serve others," he claimed, "in order to lift ourselves up out of the state of degradation and

selfishness into which we have fallen. We should be grateful to the needy for making it possible for us to raise ourselves. That is the only real good that comes out of all that we do for others, we merely better ourselves.

To seek commendation for a kindly act invariably drew forth a caustic response from the Swami. He showed little mercy toward anyone who was vain of his good deeds. The merit of service in his measure of values lay, not in giving, but in giving freely—without a sense of giving. "Swami Vivekananda was right," he declared, "when he said, 'Let the receiver stand up and permit; let the giver kneel down and give thanks that he has been given a chance to unfold himself.' This is no exaggeration. It is literally true; for what happens when you do good to another? You expand your own heart and grow more unselfish. But suppose there were no needy or unfortunate souls, what would happen? You would become a selfish brute." And he

added, "If you do anything to make a man happy, no matter what it is, be glad of it. You have done well. But try never to bring misery to any living being. This is the only sin."

One sultry evening a number of friends had come directly from their offices to the monastery, as was their frequent custom, and had gathered round the Swami near the north door of the monastery hall. As he talked to them his face was alight with a radiant smile and his body rocked back and forth in rhythm with the rise and fall of his voice. One of the gentlemen asked: "Is it possible really to work for man until you have realised God?" The Swami replied: "Work! What do you mean by work for others? You can do nothing unless you have the commandment of God. Without that, if you try to work for others, you are sure to be lost in the meandering paths of the world." Then after a moment's pause he continued: "If you would help others, you must look on the bright side of every one. Every man has his weaknesses, but you must overlook them and see only his good qualities. You must give up all fault-finding; or if you find fault, let it be with yourself."

Swami Ramakrishnananda was at his best in this informal mode of teaching. He never counted his audience. Whether he was speaking to two or two hundred or two thousand, the same ardour gave force and warmth to his words. He did not measure out his inspiration according to the number of his listeners. It came from within and came abundantly, however few were present. Once when he had talked long and impressively on a lofty subject, I exclaimed: "Swami, you talk to me as if I were an audience of a thousand." "You are," he replied quietly. But whether he spoke

from the platform or in conversation, his message was always peculiarly his own. He admitted to me one day that his Master had entrusted to him a certain special message to convey to the world which he did not give even to Swami Vivekananda. "Swamiji was given the big, all-round message but a little message was kept for me," he said. That he transmitted it faithfully and forcefully none can doubt. He sought no glory for himself in doing it. He rarely referred to his own experience in his lectures and classes. His Master was the paramount authority cited at all times. The Swami was not an eloquent speaker, not even a fluent one; but what he said carried. It had the weight of realisation behind it. He never resorted to oratorical subterfuge to stir his listeners or hold their attention. His sole concern was by simple, unobtrusive means to create a new and higher point of contact for their thought. He sought less to help than to awaken, that those who heard might help themselves.

His was a voice from the heights. He never defined his method or intention to me, but he held, I believe, that as he had chosen the highest vocation, what he gave the world must be on the same lofty level. His appeal was always to man's soul-nature. "You are pure, you are perfect, you are divine by your nature," were reiterated words on his lips. "A man may mistake a rope for a snake, but any amount of imagination will not turn the rope into a snake. So you may think you have committed many sins or been guilty of wrong-doing, but nothing can change your pure, divine nature. That remains always the same and you are always

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"Without the help of God, no one can realise his eternal nature, however indestructible it may be. Sri Krishna

says plainly in the Gita : ' This Maya with which I cover myself, no one can pierce through. They only can penetrate it who take refuge at my Feet.' And again : ' If you would gain wisdom or the knowledge of your infinite nature, you must go to one who has realised his infinite nature and serve him ; then bring forth your doubts and you will be illumined.' That means, you must be humble. Knowledge of the Atman or Higher Self comes only through humility."

To the man who was absorbed in his material problems the Swami may have seemed too transcendental, but in reality he was pre-eminently practical ; for the one sure remedy for anxiety, he claimed, was vision. " When worries and perplexities rise in our mind," he said, " it shows we have ceased to believe in God, and that He is caring for us. If we have real faith in God, we can never grow anxious." He knew too well that solving a problem did not bring release : that out of that solution would spring a new problem. The only way of escape lay in cutting the endless chain of perplexities by rousing in man that which was superior to all outer material conditions.

" Why should you throw away your perfect nature and take an imperfect

nature ? " he asked. " Why do you give up your infinite life for this perishable life of a few years ? You have degraded yourself. The omnipotent, omniscient, immortal, eternal being is imagining that he dies ; that he is limited, ignorant, weak and helpless. You are pure, you are spotless. Do not give way to false imagination. This false imagining will make you what you are imagining yourself to be. You are like a man who hears the false news that his entire fortune has been lost and begins to lament and ask : ' What shall I do ? How shall I live ? ' ; while all the time his lands and money are there as before. So you are imagining that you are miserable and helpless ; but you have not lost your infinite glory. You are absolutely perfect, all-blissful, immortal.

" This outer body of yours is only an instrument and cannot limit you, except as you give it the power. You have actually need of nothing ; you are already complete, but you have forgotten it. You have thrown away the real jewel and are making much of the pebble in the street. Do not be content with the little things of this world. This universe is a baby's toy. Throw it away. Claim your infinite heritage. This little span of life is not yours ; your life has no beginning and no end."

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## WAS THERE A UNITARY KARMA DOCTRINE ?

By H. D. Bhattacharyya, M. A., B. L., (P.R.S.), Darsanasagara

(Continued from page 256)

**T**HERE now remains to consider only the last form of the Karma doctrine, namely, the material-accidental type. According to this the smiles of fortune come not from moral actions nor from the piety of others nor from the grace of God but from pure accidents of the external world.

It would be necessary to trace the history of this belief a bit in order to understand it in its correct perspective. We have already alluded to the fact that a sacrifice was a very complicated affair and that a slight fault anywhere in its performance might outweigh the entire set of proprieties observed therein. Now a sacrifice involved a number of factors—seasonal, personal, material and formal. The time must be correctly diagnosed—a sacrifice performed out of time is of no avail. That means some knowledge of the movements of heavenly bodies as also of the time suitable for particular sacrifices. Then again the persons that are to take part in the sacrifice are to be correctly chosen and their order of precedence is to be nicely determined if they are taking part as priests. The principal and, if necessary, his wife are to observe the rules about cleanliness and continence and the preliminary vows associated with the various sacrifices. They must also be in a state of ceremonial purity and free from all such bodily ailments that take away from the validity of a sacrificial act. Where substitution is permitted the representative of the principal must satisfy the conditions of valid sacrifice as the

principal himself was expected to do. Then again the materials must be correctly chosen. Oblations are offered with different articles in different sacrifices and the preparation of viands for the gods as well as for the priests and the principal is to be made in a definite way. Here again the migration of the race from its original home must have necessitated a fairly extensive substitution of original prescriptions, as many of the articles prescribed must have been unavailable in its new homes; but once the substitutes were fixed upon they must be adhered to at all costs or the whole sacrifice would be vitiated. To give one illustration, the corn most used in ancient sacrifices was probably barley; but when the population moved east and south sesamum took its place and now every Hindu rite requires this article without allowing a substitution by mustard which has however replaced sesamum for cooking food in North India. As a matter of fact, some sacrifices fell into disuse solely because the main ingredient was not available in the new places, e. g., the Soma sacrifice. Sometimes advanced conceptions of morality had a similar effect, as when animal sacrifice gave way to symbolic substitutes of a vegetable kind or when wine disappeared from worship. The formal element of sacrifice, namely, the order of the Mantras to be chanted and the materials to be offered with the Mantras as well as the proper intonation of the hymns and songs, could not be obviously dispensed with; but new

sacrifices and worships were instituted and a new kind of Sanskrit was evolved to offer prayers to the gods, and when any default was feared expiatory and apologetic verses were composed to placate the annoyed deities. In short, the entire attempt was to stereotype the sacrificial programme as much as possible and to make concessions to circumstances and localities only when otherwise there was some danger of the cult being discontinued altogether. This ensured a kind of religious uniformity among the entire Aryan population, but because the area was large and quick change in one spot could not be followed up easily elsewhere (as culture diffuses slowly and innovation in religious matters is difficult to secure), a certain amount of conservatism was inevitable and thus the ancient rituals of India have remained far more constant than later rites evolved locally. Their freedom from sectarian influences also tended to keep them inviolate over wide areas, and being couched in obsolete Sanskrit, the ceremony could be less tampered with by later reformers. Their religious value could be differently appraised no doubt and some even questioned their utility, but when performed they had to be done in a proper manner with suitable Mantras and materials.

We shall concentrate now upon the materials of sacrifice. An uninterrupted association with a particular material in any undertaking is likely to give rise in course of time to the belief that that material has a religious value independently of its being a symbol of adoration for which any other article might as well have been chosen. Hence it would be natural to suppose that without that article the sacrifice itself would be infructuous, if not productive of an opposite effect. When the concept of sacrifice does not rise above the

material plane such a crude belief is not easily removed—as a matter of fact, many seasonal worships have been fixed with the particular materials available at the time in view. It is no wonder, therefore, that this narrowness of the sacrificial cult should spread to the theistic religions and elaborate prescriptions laid down about the flowers, plants and fruits that this or that god likes and without which the worship would lose materially in efficacy. Can any one now dream of offering Tulasi to Siva and Bilva-leaf to Vishnu? Would any Vaishnava agree to count the names of Hari with Rudraksha seeds or any Saiva use Tulasi-beads in his rosary? Even the sectarian marks are unalterable and no two Vaishnava sects would wear the same marks when performing their Pujas of the same God. Apparently, here we are in the realm of magical efficacy and sectarian aloofness and not of reasonable probability and large-minded toleration. We believe, in short, that it is not the faith that counts but the materials through which we express that faith. It is assumed, in fact, that as for interviewing a great personage, we must be properly dressed and carry proper presents—otherwise no interview is likely to be granted. All religions have insisted more or less upon special vestments for religious devotees, possibly for the psychological effect that they produce upon the mind by way of reminding them of their occupation of the moment; but when the primary intention is forgotten and the emphasis is shifted to wrong quarters then obviously a great spiritual danger is ahead and we may begin to think that it is not what we think but what we carry on our body that matters in worship.

A similar danger lurks in taking the time element too seriously. We are unable at this distance of time to deter-

mine what prompted the first Aryans to fix the times of their sacrifices—it is not improbable that some sacrifices were primarily thanks-offerings like the Navanna (new-rice) Sraddha which is celebrated when the harvest has been gathered. Some of the Vratas were similarly necessitated by climatic conditions, e.g., the Chaturmasya Vrata which closely resembled the Vassa (the rains) residence of the Buddhist monks for four months in one place when the country became unfit for travel on account of the swollen rivers and temporary marshes of the rainy months. A certain amount of star-gazing was also necessary to fix the times of the various sacrifices. But in all these procedures there is a hidden danger, for it might be supposed that time is of the essence of the sacrifice as it is of natural events and that things of the spirit obey the laws of time as much as the things of nature do.

We shall study now the applications of these observations to the doctrine of Karma. We have seen already that the theory is really meant to explain the law of moral action; but when the complication was introduced that morality could not be dissociated from certain conditions of material and time, the effect was that the spiritual and moral elements were subordinated to the extraneous factors of time and material object. So long as these were taken in their theistic setting the injury was not very great, for after all it was also necessary that the peculiar religious disposition should also be present in a worship or sacrifice. But what happened was that they were soon dissociated from religion altogether and treated as independent conditions of good or evil results.

Let us take first the element of time. From the fact that certain conjunctions of planets and stars are necessary for

the performance of sacrifices it was gradually supposed that they themselves had mystic influences over men's fate and that, irrespective of whether religious things are done under their auspices, they themselves should be regarded as producers of good or evil. Thus it is not what we have deserved by our actions in the past life (or lives) that matters but how we are born—the constellations that are in the ascendant at the time of our birth determine what kind of earthly life we are likely to lead. It is not by the merit of our past lives that we expect to enjoy conjugal happiness but by choosing a partner in life having the proper astrological influences about her, and we may cut short our life by making an injudicious selection. Nay, even a child inauspiciously born may kill its father or mother or brother and it may do the same thing by cutting its first teeth out of time. You cannot marry on any day you please nor at any time of the day if you wish to live long, nor can you afford to die at any time, for surely you may very easily catch some Dosha (fault) and jeopardise your future and become an ugly ghost needing expiation for redemption. A whole life-time spent on good works may thus be spoiled by an inadvertent timing of the moment of death. It is very seldom suggested that a particular birth may be an index and not a cause of a particular life—that birth under certain stars and a particular form of life are co-effects of the same cause, namely, the kind of past life we led; for in that case propitiation of the hostile powers would not prevent the maturation of the fruits of a past life. What is believed rather is that it is the stars that are responsible for certain types of future, but also that the cleverness of man has been able to discover at the same time the antidotes against their

malign influences, and not only prayer and Puja but also amulets and charms that check their baneful effects are remedies that are available to counteract planetary influences.

It is not only at critical periods of our life that these planetary bodies work their mischief or good. Astrologers are able to tell us the law of their operation at all seasons in relation to different types of men, i. e., men born under different influences, and it behoves us to consult the daily almanac to determine whether on a particular day or at a particular moment an undertaking should be begun. In addition to the special influences there are again general influences that operate impartially for good or evil on all alike and these are to be observed by all. It does not matter with what span of life you were born—you may cut it short by an inauspicious journey, say, under Magha or Aslesha or on a Tryahasparsha day or on a Pratipada Tithi or on the first day of the month (on which day the sage Agastya began his famous journey to the South and never returned) or under adverse conjunctions of stars and Tithis (e. g., Papayogadosha, Masadagdha, Pakshantadosha) or during prohibited periods of the day and the night (Varavela and Kalavela). No amount of previous merit will avail against the potent influence of the stars and so unless some loophole can be found to frustrate their vindictive wrath (e. g., by getting hold of some Amritayoga at that time) or some ceremonies are performed before or after to scotch the malign influences of hostile bodies, there is sure to be some misfortune at some time or other. If the bad influence is continuous in character, then it may be necessary to wear some amulet (Kavacha) or gem (Ratnadharana) or to perform some

Svastayana (bringer-of-good) ceremony to dispose the stars in one's favour. The entire idea is to square the accounts here below and to counteract the evil produced by astral influences by proper steps as soon as it is threatened. Men suffer not because of vicious actions but because they have been unfortunate to come under the influence of certain stars; and the suffering can be avoided not by moral action but by performing placatory ceremonies or wearing charms. If men wish to win fame or pass an examination or win a law-suit, all that is necessary is that they should wear certain Kavachas (and these Kavachas are now produced on a large scale and not with a particular person in view as in the past). Thus a mass production of charms (corresponding to the manufacture of indulgences in Roman Catholicism) irrespective of the time of birth of particular persons is in full swing just now in India, and credulous persons catching at a straw to save their ruined fortunes (or health) readily fall a victim to catchy advertisements and buy them in the fond hope that they would thus cheat the gods of the punishments due to their faulty past lives.

There is no doubt that the ordinary people are incapable of appreciating the mysterious working of a past which they do not remember. They see the visible effects of the sun and the moon on the external world and naturally infer that a similar influence is exerted on themselves also—where they go beyond the premises is that they imagine that this influence extends to their spiritual entities also and is not limited to their bodies merely. Thus a propitious birth may endow them with all good qualities, confer on them longevity and make their lives happy unless by ill-advised undertakings and

alliances the prospect of good is marred by personal volition. At every step, therefore, one ought to be circumspect for the stars are always operating (at later times even the days of the week were imagined to have similar effects) and if perchance any lapse has occurred immediate steps should be taken to propitiate the gods and counteract the consequences of their offended majesty. The chances of offence were enormously multiplied and so also the ceremonies of expiation, for to every default it is possible to put forward an expiation—mostly a monetary equivalence of moral lapse, and men might get bad results not only by their own evil deeds but also because they have got mixed up with an unexpiated affair of other persons. Thus a Brahmin might catch a sinful infection by touching the corpse of a Sudra and any one burning a person who was suffering from a loathsome disease and had not expiated it by Chandrayana is likely to get bad results for contact with such a body whatsoever might be the merit of helping in a cremation.

When gods take offence so quickly provision has necessarily to be made for a quick change of their temper in one's favour. It is no longer necessary to suppose that moral actions alone are pleasing to the gods. Pilgrimage to their famous seats and death there are sure ways of gaining salvation. Thus the material-accidental aspect of Karma comes into full view. If you die at Benares Siva will save you, and so also will Vishnu if you lay down your body at Brindaban or Tirupati. Nay, bathe in any of the sacred streams and you are sure not only to save yourself but also to save your ancestors unto the 7-th degree, especially if such bath has been performed in a proper season. Of course, the more arduous the pilgrimage and the bath the greater the reward:

but during an eclipse and on certain festivals and auspicious moments merit can be more easily acquired by a plunge even though there is nothing to show that barring a temporary attitude of devotion (and even that may not be necessary to get some benefit) there was anything to deserve meritorious results. Cremation at Manikarnika Ghat at Benares is supposed to save and so large sums are paid to have this privilege of burning there; similarly Sraddha at Gaya saves without reference to merit. We see how merit is now determined by localities and how sinful souls rush to these places for spiritual safety at the time of death just as at one time criminals used to take refuge in temples in Rome to escape the clutches of the law. The main thing to remember is that it is not always faith and abject surrender that are practised by the dying soul to win the right to salvation—it is rather believed that the effect is mechanical and all that is necessary is that one should reach the zone of safety in time.

It is not to be supposed, however, that this belief in the efficacy of mechanical aids and localities characterises only the later period of decadence. Even as early as Charaka we meet with a list of things that act as antidotes against premature death (in which for very obvious reasons Charaka believed, for who would consult a doctor if the span of life has been unalterably fixed at birth by the results of our past actions?) and this includes mantra, aushadhi, mani, mangala, bali, upahara, homa, niyama, prayaschitta, upavasa, svastyayana, pranipata and gamana (pilgrimage)—this makes it clear that material and spiritual things were supposed to be equally efficacious in warding off the evil effects of a past life. But superstition has liberally lengthened this list

and now you may risk your life by starting when any one sneezes or a lizard ticks or any one calls you from behind. You are not to start within seven days of an eclipse—a superstition practised by the Greeks also,—unless you wish to tempt your fate. In this way events of the physical world, especially those of a casual and unexpected nature, get connected with our destinies and, in spite of all that we have deserved by our moral deeds, prove our undoing. Conversely, we may augment the favours of fortune by placing auspicious things on our way when we start and we may get signs from the gods about the success or failure of our undertakings as we see certain things to our right or to our left—a jackal or a corpse on the left, for instance, indicates success.

It may be freely admitted that in many of these superstitions the primary impulse comes from a desire to lift a little the veil of mystery that shrouds the operation of the law of Karma in our lives. The stars and the omens tell us what to expect in life and if the gods are not wholly impotent we may take timely action to change the course of our destiny. Who would agree to float helplessly on the tide of fortune, believing that the course of life has been unalterably fixed at birth? May there not be also a secret link running through the entire creation whereby the material things of the earth may ward off the subtle influences of planetary bodies just as they act against bodily infirmities? These

beliefs have been possible because there has never been a unitary theory of Karma and ethical needs have been freely supplemented by divine possibilities. Social charity would dry up if matters have been finally settled in the scheme of the world and no improvement is possible anywhere; and love that conquers death will have no opportunity to express itself if relatives are merely helpless spectators of suffering here and hereafter. So popular thought has shown scant courtesy to logic in a matter which affects man not only intellectually but also affectively and volitionally. Karma binds us and yet we must be free; we are weak and yet we must be saved; things of the external world affect us for good and evil and so other things of the same world must act as antidotes—these necessitate contradictory forms of faith in Karma and thus ethical, religious, vicarious and mechanical modes of operation of Karma have been formulated without much reference to their consistency. Some have emphasised this aspect and some that, some have believed in gods and souls and others have not, and yet there has been a singular unanimity of belief in the existence of an exorable law of moral justice in India in spite of much credal difference. The object of the present article is to draw attention to the protean forms of this theory and to the necessity of re-thinking the whole problem in the light of man's moral and spiritual experiences. Would light come again from South India as it has so often done in the past?

(Concluded)

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## CAN PHILOSOPHY COME BACK ?\*

*By Benjamin Ginsburg*

**Q**UR age has not been an age of philosophy and in fact the very idea of philosophy as an intellectual discipline is held in disrepute in many countries, particularly in the United States. One has only to compare the amount of newspaper interest devoted to a congress of philosophers and that devoted to a congress of scientists.

Were philosophy a specialised art or a specialised science, one might accept its present low status as one of the vicissitudes of time and wait for a turn of the wheel. Thus at certain periods a particular science such as physics has been in the ascendant among the whole group of sciences; at other times biology has been in the ascendant and physics has been almost backward. This does not raise a problem, any more than the fact that one age has specially cultivated music while another age has cultivated the plastic arts.

But philosophy cannot be regarded in that light. It is not a specialised discipline, but a general approach to human experience. For this reason its present backwardness must mean either one of two things. Either the philosophical approach is thoroughly and radically bankrupt, and humanity should actively abandon philosophy as a useless and mischievous dissipation of energy; or else it is not the philosophical approach that is bankrupt, but social and cultural conditions, in which case it becomes our duty to sound an intellectual call to arms.

Nearly a hundred years ago, Auguste Comte formulated a law of history which in effect doomed philosophy as

an obsolete method of thinking. First, he said, there came the theological stage of thought, then the metaphysical, and finally, in modern times, the scientific stage. The implication of this law is that philosophy has now to give way to scientific specialisation, and this has indeed been the feeling of modern times, although few have attempted to express this feeling in a reasoned intellectual form, in the manner of Comte. Only recently H. G. Wells gave public expression to this belief when he said that the value of science lay in the fact that it offered us an escape from philosophy and religion, both of which will eventually have to be abandoned as unsuitable for our essentially practical minds.

Wide-spread as this point of view is, it does not stand up under any sort of critical examination. In fact it is self-refuting as soon as it is recognised that knowledge and thought require not only analytic specialisation but also synthesis and critical reflection on fundamental principles. It does not matter by whom this work of synthesis and reflection is carried on: the point is that it is an essential part—if not the most important part—of the intellectual process, and that this phase of the process has a different look and different characteristics from those suggested at the moment of specialisation and quest for facts. Critical reflection cannot of necessity possess the same character of fixity and positiveness as scientific fact-finding in which no questions of principle are involved.

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(Reprinted from "The Nation," Wednesday, August 31, 1932.)

It may be said that the whole idea of regarding the knowledge process as the dividing up of a field into so many specialised scientific homesteads grew up at a time when the fundamental principles of science were for the moment so stable that they did not need to be discussed or criticised. But in a period of accelerated scientific progress, like the present, it becomes apparent that there are no fixed fundamental principles, and that the scientific process taken as a whole involves philosophical reflection on fundamental categories concurrently with the quest for specific facts. Einstein confesses that he derived the idea for applying a new geometry in physics from reading the philosophic writings of Henri Poincaré, who in turn followed out a line of critical enquiry begun by Kant. Similarly, the German physicist, Max Planck, concludes a survey of the new quantum physics with the advice that physicists consult the views and ideas of the great philosophers on the problems connected with determinism and causality. Obviously, the advice was not offered on the theory that philosophers possess some power or mystical illumination not given to experimental scientists. Rather was it given with the realisation that the experimental facts involve fundamental categories whose relationship had been the subject of reflective study by the great thinkers.

Once it is recognised that even natural science involves philosophic criticism, the whole perspective with regard to the social sciences must undergo a radical change. A great part of the energy of social scientists has been spent not in collecting facts or in systematising principles, but in a sort of mad attempt to run away from philosophical ideas in order better to live up to the stage conception of

science. A recent historian of experimental psychology publicly admits that experimental psychologists have sought to run away from philosophy and have in consequence merely passed off bad philosophy under the label of scientific psychology. But instead of asking psychologists to master the philosophic problems involved in their science, the same historian wants psychologists in the future to leave philosophy completely and severely alone. If physicists have been able to get along without worrying about what the philosopher says, why should not psychologists? The answer is, in the first place, that physicists have not been able to keep entirely away from philosophy; and in the second place, that in psychology there happens to be less natural leeway for routine specialisation without philosophic reflection, than in the physical or biological sciences. What is true of psychology is true of all the social sciences as a class.

In addition to the value of philosophical criticism in connection with both the natural and the social sciences, there is the far more important value of philosophy in crystallising the spirit of social disinterestedness and idealism, on which all ethics, all orderly life in society must depend. Thought, consciousness, is not merely a tool for achieving greater knowledge of the external world and for helping us to manipulate external objects more successfully; it is also the source of that movement of unification between man and man which tempers our biological selfishness to fit a framework of ideal interests and social sympathies. In the past this function of unifying idealism was fulfilled by religion, which is after all a rough and rather naive philosophy of human

experiences. Today religion has broken down, largely because its institutional commitments prevent it from modernising its ideas in line with the progress of scientific knowledge. But while religion has broken down, it does not follow that the need of crystallising a moral and social consciousness has disappeared. Quite on the contrary, the need is greater than ever because we can no longer count upon the passive inertia of habit and custom, or upon the instinctive fear of the supernatural to instil a semblance of order in human affairs. Today men need to be convinced by reason, and the only type of reason which is here convincing is to show, both by logic and by example, that man as a conscious being has interests far transcending his biological appetites. And who can undertake such a demonstration and its practical application in concrete problems except the philosopher who is interested in studying the total place of reason in human experience and who has no commitments except to seek the truth ?

No, it is not because the philosophic approach is bankrupt or because philosophy has no longer any functions to fulfil, that philosophy does not flourish today. The reason is in part the intellectual confusion that has developed around the success of science, but in greater part it is the mechanisation of social life which has intensified the practical struggle for existence and has left less and less place for disinterested thought and disinterested leadership. Human nature is about the same as it has always been: there are the same idealistic instincts as in the past. But the important fact is that it is harder to make a living today. It may indeed be harder to philosophise today because of the increase of man's knowledge and per-

spective, but even before the stage of thought is reached, it has become tremendously more difficult to put oneself physically in a position to think honestly and disinterestedly. And in this problem of making a living, disinterested thinking is quite useless—useless to the individual as an economic weapon for gaining a living and meaningless to a public that is exhausted with economic cares. Science, to be sure, constitutes an exception to the rule, but it is only by accident that disinterested scientific thinking has been fitted into the machine.

In the case of philosophy it is idle to suggest that society accept philosophy as an economic calling and that it endow more philosophic chairs in the universities. For while science can flourish as an endowed speciality, philosophy is too closely connected with the social consciousness to be able to exist as a specialised calling unsupported by direct public participation. The condition of philosophy at the universities today is a mute testimonial to this truth. Philosophy has become a museum speciality, a lifeless play of systems and concepts to which the public can point in derision to justify its contempt for it. Philosophy will not flower until our present high strung economic life gives way to a regime in which it will be possible to cultivate the love of wisdom.

Fortunately, there are signs that our economic Frankenstein is due to break down from its own internal weaknesses. The fate of philosophy is thus tied up with the fate of social reform. And it becomes more than ever the duty of those who can muster disinterested thought at a time when such thought is at a premium, to work for a new society, a society in which there will be room for reason and in which the administration will be in the hands of reason.

## VEDANTA IN THE MAKING

By

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(Continued from page 263)

THUS, along these two lines of reflexion—viz., that of a transcendent Reality beyond phenomena and an impersonal Law—we are led to the idea of a Supreme Being as Person (पुरुषः) which forms the pivot of a spiritualistic Monotheism. The first in importance is that of *Hiranyagarbha* we come across in the opening verse of X, 121 where he is represented as the 'first-born' (समवर्तमानः), and as installed to sole sovereignty over all created beings, and is finally identified with *Prajapati*, as the lord of all creatures. From parity of functions it is clear that the *Prajapati*, again, is the god *Visvakarma*, the Indian Vulcan,—the maker and architect of all, and the equation has been made in so many words, in *Satapatha Brahmana*. \* Even in the *Rgveda*, *Visvakarma* is invested with a preeminence that alone squares with the status and function assigned to *Hiranyagarbha* and *Prajapati*. Now, there is, strictly speaking, no inaptitude in the equation thus effected between the first-born *Hiranyagarbha* and *Prajapati* or *Visvakarma* in the role of a Supreme Creator. Likewise it is maintained that from the *Purusha Virat* was born, and from *Virat* proceeded the *Purusha*. The point of all such equation is a scrupulous regard for obviating the difficulties that beset the conception of a First Creator. Truly speaking, 'contentment with the regress to a

God-creator or some similar notion is the true mark of speculative indolence'. For, an abrupt arresting of the causal regress at a First Cause or God-creator lays itself open to the most pertinent question of the child: "Who made God?" One way of escape from the *impasse* is a straightforward denial of creation in the strict sense of the term, accompanied by the demonstration that the supreme reality is, as in *Erigena* and *Bruno*, at once *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*. But no less marked is the tendency in the *Rgveda* to stave off the incidence of this pantheistic denial, and to envisage fully the problem of creation in a theistic regard. It is the far-famed *Nasadiya Sukta* (Rg. X. 129) that affords a striking evidence of the 'bitter earnest' with which the problem of creation has been approached, and presented with a telling effect through an imagery that is commensurate with the grandeur of the theme. Here we have the unambiguous assertion of 'That one' ("तदेकम्"), with its central importance in a creative reference, who 'breathed by itself without breath, other than it, there was nothing'. \* Although there is in the opening *Rk* of this *Sukta* a problematic admission of a primeval deep abyss—and elsewhere † a clear enunciation of an all-encompassing water as a co-operating condition coeval with the Creator—the *Nasadiya* hymn may be

\* VII, 2, 1, 10; VIII, 2, 11, 19.

\* *Rgveda*, X, 129, 11. † *Ibid.* X, 72, vi; X, 121, vii.

taken as the very text of uncompromising monotheism, rounding itself off in a characteristic speculative monism of the agnostic or mystic type, with its inevitable *ignoramus* at the end. This is surely better than the story of creation told by a world-architect, a *Demiurgus* as the fashioner or manipulator of a pre-existent unformed matter. In respect of its philosophic implications, the hymn compares more favourably with the cryptic utterance in the Book of Genesis where 'the Spirit of God' moving 'on the face of the waters' is said to have imparted a quickening impulse to the creation of all that was to be.

The original brooding or inward concentration of the creative impulse is suggested by the term 'tapas' (तपः) which is, at least in the Upanishads identified with the creative principle or its *modus operandi*.\* The primary manifestation of this spiritual fervour of inwardisation is the impact of Desire (*Kama*) as 'the primal seed of mind' which, as the fourth *Rk* clearly lays down, serves to explain 'the root of Being in Non-Being.' Although this original seed of mind (मनसो रेतः) clearly involves self-consciousness as its logical *prius*, the question of historical priority of the one or the other is irrelevant in a philosophical reference. The query—which precedes which—is as futile as the squirrel's chasing its own tail within the enclosure of its cage. As it has been well remarked, there is no first, but always, a second

moment of consciousness. Accordingly this original desire, which is confessedly the outstanding feature of a self-conscious Purusha (सोऽकामयत्) points unmistakably in the direction of an I-ness (*Ichheit*), as Fichte would say which comprehends as well as transcends the opposition of the ego and the non-ego, the subject and the object—a pure Ego, which is not so much a fact as an act, of which strictly speaking, nothing can be predicated except the bare fact of its being. Thus, the note on which the hymn closes is one of ultimate doubts and uncertainty; for, here we perceive that we have come to the end of our tether. The essential mystery of the creative act is clearly the burden of the last *Rk* of the hymn in which we are told that He from whom this creation proceeded, whether He made it or did not, the highest seer in the highest of heavens, He forsooth knows it, or He might as well not know it!† Again, it is held, † as the concluding reflection of the Rgvedic seer, that people do not, and cannot, comprehend Him who has created this universe; inherently mystified they indulge in speculations of various kinds, while they go about catering to their brute necessities and uttering hymns or invocations *ad libitum*. The sentiment that inspired this reflection naturally looms large across the perspective of ages and commends itself to our acceptance when we find a noted philosopher of the present age confirming substantially the very same outlook. "We admit," says Bradley in summing up his 'ultimate doubts,' "the healthy scepticism for which all knowledge in a sense is vanity, which feels in its heart that

\* (i) तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म ततोऽन्नमभिजायते ।  
अन्नात् प्राणो मनः सत्यं लोकाः कर्म-  
सु चामृतम् ॥—Mundaka Up. I. 1, 9.

(ii) स तपोऽतप्यत । स तपस्तप्त्वा ॥  
इदं सर्वमसृजत ॥—Taittiriya Up. II. 5.

(iii) तपो ब्रह्मेति—*Ibid.* III. 4.

\* As against the agnostic strain in which the *Rk* is interpreted by European scholars, Sayana, however, interprets it as 'He alone knows it.'

† Rgveda, X, 92, vii.

science is a poor thing if measured by the wealth of the real universe. We justify the natural wonder which delights to stray beyond our daylight world, and to follow paths that lead into half-known, half-unknowable regions. Our conclusion, in brief, has explained and has confirmed the irresistible impression that all is beyond us"—the impression entertained 'upon instinct' 'that to love unsatisfied the world is mystery, a mystery which love satisfied seems to comprehend.' †

It is then the logic of speculative thought that bids us march past the last outpost of monotheism with its basic concept of one Supreme Being or *Purusha*. As soon as this one God or God-creator emerges into limelight, He loses himself in light, or at best, is resurrected and recognised as the One of philosophic formulation or speculative monism. Thus is ushered into existence the last or final phase of Rgvedic thought, following strictly the lead of a logical order of development. The *Nasadiya* hymn may, therefore, be said to stand at the crossways, pointing on the one hand to religion and, on the other, to philosophy, and marking, in effect the transition from religion to philosophy. It is only superficial analysis that assimilates this hymn to that of Cleanthes to Zeus. The 'that one' (तदेकम्) of *Nasadiya Sukta* has much more doctrinal affinity with the 'One Existent' of the famous Rgvedic text: "This one Being the wise call by various names Agni, Yama or Matarisva"§ than with Zeus, 'nature's Great King' 'God, most glorious, called by many a name.' This is, however, not a solitary instance of

the speculative monism of the *Rgveda*, but there are to be found scattered in its texts definitely inculcating a rigorous philosophical monism. Take for example, the refrain that occurs at the last line of each of the twenty-two hymns of *Sukta* 55 of Mandala 3: "The great divinity of the gods is one" (महद्देवानामसुखत्वमेकं). Then, again, it is maintained that this one became all these (*Rg.* viii 58. ii), or that the sages represent in various ways this One Being (*Ibid.* X. 114. v). Now the generic feature common to all these texts is a pronounced unity (एकत्वम्), coupled with omniformity (विविधत्वम्),—that is to say, a unity in variety, which is at the farthest remove from a barren uniformity. There is no denying the fact that the unifying tendency of Rgvedic thought, as of Indian thought in general, has not infrequently come under the spell of the mystic's 'One' along with the false glamour encircling it. With a cloud of unknowing' on its face, the mystic's 'One' or 'Absolute' is too apt to lose itself in the clouds, or through sheer excess of light to suffer itself to be enveloped in a 'Divine darkness.' The effect, however, is the same in both the cases; and the mystic's desire to exalt the One, however laudable within limits, illustrates the fate of 'Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself and falls on the other.' Nevertheless it must not be forgotten that the mystic contention that 'a comprehended God is no God' has a saving grace as against a cheap gnosticism. "What discredits religion," as Dr. L. C. P. Jacks rightly observes, "is not the unknowableness of God but the knowableness of Mumbo-Jumbo."\*

The culminating point, however, in this last phase of speculative monism is

\* *Appearance and Reality* 2nd Ed. P. 549.

† *Ibid.* Preface.

§ एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यमि यमं मातरिश्वान-  
माहुः—*Rgveda*, I. 164. xlv.

\* *Realities and Shams*, p. 19.

reached in the substantiation of the Self or Ego, as the supreme creative principle, which may be said to mark the beginning of ego-centric worship (ब्रह्मोपासना). In the first instance what is called the *Vamadeviya Sukta*\* inculcates the truth in its own figurative way thus: "I have been Manu, I have been Suryya, I am the wise Rshi Kakshivan. While even in the womb I came to learn in due course about the nativity of these gods. Encased previously in a hundred bodies of iron, I have now emerged with the velocity of a hawk." All that the last passage implies, as Sayana clearly brings out, is that Vamadeva emerged from the womb only when he realised that the soul-substance is distinct from the body and the rest of the material world. Stripped of all metaphor and myth, what this anecdote hints at is the truth that the inherent materialism of lumping together the body and the self, spells the bondage of the latter, and the knowledge that the self is essentially free can alone release it from the bondage in question. That is what later came in for recognition as scriptural wisdom or spiritual outlook (शास्त्रदृष्टिः). In view of the progressive emphasis upon, and consolidation of, this ego-centric point of view in the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad*,† in the *Brahma sutras*, (e.g., शास्त्रदृष्टयानूपदेशो वामदेवत् I.1-30) and in Sankara, in particular, the importance of the Vamadeviya Sukta in the *Rgveda* cannot possibly be overestimated. This point of view is further re-inforced by another famous hymn, known as the *Vak Sukta*.§ Here *Vak*, the presiding deity over speech, is believed to be the seer or author, and represents herself as the sole creator and governor of all

—as one whose glory is too great to be fully encompassed either by heaven or by earth.

Reviewing the growth of *Rgveda* thought as embodied in the hymns dedicated to their respective specific gods, the following graded hierarchy may, with a fair degree of accuracy, be made out: (1) *Dyaus* or *Dyava-prithivi* as the god of nature-worship; (2) *Varuna*, as the moralised deity of awakened moral reflection of a later period; (3) *Indra*, as the jealous god of the age of conquest and domination; (4) *Prajapati*, as the God-creator of the monotheists and (5) *Ekam* or the One, as the maximised essence of each of the gods of the preceding stages.\* The gradation satisfies at once the requirements of logic as well as chronology. Here, as elsewhere, chronological considerations cannot be rigorously followed out on account of the inherent syncretism of Indian thought. The significance of the *Rgveda* in the making of the Vedanta lies not so much in any positive contribution towards it, but in preparing the field for the reception of the Vedanta. Although the main lines on which Vedantic thought was destined to develop hereafter, lie prefigured herein, the value of the *Rgveda* is to be measured by what it aspired to be and was not in actuality. It begins with that infantile wonder and its native hue of creative imagination, which is not, as yet, 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.' Later, reflective thought supervenes and seeks to introduce system and order into the reign of lawless mythologising and god-making. Once criticism is aroused, the mongrel method of allegorizing is steadily on the wane, until the repugnant elements in that patched-up unity break asunder and dissipate it altogether. Before the

\* *Rgveda*, IV Suktas 26 and 27.

† I, iv, 10.

§ *Rgveda*, X, 125.

\* Cf. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, Ch. ii.

noon-day achievements of reflective thought, the twilight of mythopoetic activity does admittedly pale away into insignificance, and thus all its findings are safely relegated to a forgotten chapter in the history of man's search after truth. Nevertheless the *Rgveda*, with all its backwardness, may truly be said to have succeeded in what it seems to have failed in: its twilight of god-making eagerly anticipates the dawn of a new intellectual era. Its failure, if it is to be at all called by that name, is but a triumph's evidence—an evidence of the perpetual urge of reflective thought in the search

after truth. In this long and arduous pilgrimage, the truth-seeker is too apt to be deterred on the way side by alluring allegories and myths masquerading as philosophic truth. Accordingly, in the making of the Vedānta, no prayer is more to the point than the one that has gone forth from the heart of the *Isavasyopanishad* :

"The entrance to truth is covered up by a shining disk; that do thou, O Sun-god, remove so that the true essence of things may be envisaged"—

हिरण्यमेव पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।

तत्त्वं पूर्वापावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥

(Concluded)

## TEMPLES AND THEIR POSSIBILITIES

By S. N. Suta

**W**HILE in certain western lands the fortunes of places of worship have taken a decidedly downward curve, here in India, among the Hindus, circumstances appear favourable to a revival surpassing all previous records. This does not mean that the Harijans (the "Untouchables" for whom this new name has been made current in the country by the Mahatma) would as a body, either immediately or after some generations, rise to an unprecedented spiritual height by taking advantage of the facilities which temple worship can give them. Such a claim would be as absurd as a counter-claim, supposing one such were to be made, that those caste Hindus, to whom the right of temple entry has descended by simple heredity, have by the exercise of that right alone, risen as a body to any spiritual height worth the name. All that is meant, and can be reasonably urged too, is that human nature is the same in the "suppressed" communities

also, in as much as it is sure to wake up and tread the path of progress when the way is convincingly demonstrated and the necessary facilities generously and reverently provided—not grudgingly conceded from a high pedestal, for such an attitude does not tend toward any one's progress, the receiver's or the giver's. From this standpoint, therefore, it is possible for an impartial observer to conclude that as generations pass, millions of Harijans would avail themselves of all the avenues of progress which temples contain, would subject themselves voluntarily to such disciplines as any pious caste Hindu finds practicable in his own life, and thereby raise themselves and the entire Hindu world to a distinctively higher level of culture. Orthodoxy's bitterness too would never be transmitted to posterity, as that posterity would insist on taking stock of the situation after independent observation, and come to realise that after all nothing was lost

by any individual but that much was *gained* by the community as a whole.

Some people seem to believe that the temple as an institution sprang into existence in a perfected condition itself, or at least that it reached its maximum possibilities quite long ago, even many centuries back. All that we have to do henceforth is therefore, they say, just to do what our immediate predecessors did, as much as we can under *modern* conditions, although it would amount to just allowing the house of God to 'breathe on', as it were, endeavouring in vain to bring within its embrace all its "admissible" worshippers, whose number, however, is fast thinning in proportion to the spread of western culture in the country. We find it hard to entertain such a view. We believe, on the contrary, that the very spirit which has prompted some trustees to utilise in their temples such *modern* conveniences as electric lighting or methods of office management based on government model, can, in due course and if approached properly, be made to introduce other wholesome changes capable of turning the temples once again into the vital centres of culture that they were intended to be. What then are the facilities these institutions now provide or can be made to provide in the future?

Starting from one extreme, we find that many temples scattered in different parts of India still do permit animal sacrifices within their precincts. Hinduism in ancient days never hesitated to take in people from even the lowest levels of culture and prescribe for them methods for achieving gradual enlightenment without causing violent breaks with their past. But as it is much easier for people to slide down than to climb up, many who think themselves on a higher level, can also be found resorting to this manner of propitiating

the deity though they may (for reasons of their own) hand over the actual work of killing to "others." Appealing to one and all without distinction, come the periodical festivals and processions held by almost all temples. With the elaborate offerings and chantings in the inner shrine, demonstrations outside it by experts in every department of life, arts especially, and more particularly the native dramas and expositions of the scriptures, well conducted festivals are ever bound to have supreme educative value on the minds of those who throng to witness them. The processions and other showy sides are calculated to impress at least the young and the imaginative while items like the pulling of the car are certain to bring about a closer bond for howsoever short a time, between all the castes. Coming up nearer to the temple, we invariably find the tank, large or small, paved or otherwise, according to the wealth of the locality where it is situated. Our wise ancestors laid down that the deity should have occasional baths in the tank, so that, at the least, the pious devotees would never fail to keep themselves *as well as the tank* scrupulously clean at all times. As for the temple structure itself, it is a meeting of all the best art which it was in the power of our ancients to command. Wherever one turns, one sees the Puranic heroes in mortar or in paint. With western criticisms in our mind we might ridicule the monstrous manner in which villains etc., have been depicted, not only in the temples but in the stories as well, but we scarcely pause to think of the absurdities which the fashionable cinema of the modern days unrolls before our unsuspecting eyes. To the credit of the Puranic stories it must be admitted that although they painted grossly exaggerated pictures, they always insisted on the villain or the

moral wrong-doer being incessantly *chased*, as it were, by the Lord and made to recognise the Divine Order of things. The Puranas were bound therefore to put one constantly in mind of the Supreme Being. The modern cinema, however, presents to the applause of its votaries, villains successfully escaping from the clutches of man-made law, or exciting scenes of love, often illicit, which cannot have the faintest chance of evoking any but the carnal instincts in man. And for exaggerated size, one has only to look at the posters on the roadside, advertising the cinema themes !.....This brings us naturally to the Mandapam (temple hall) where stories from the scriptures are to be narrated. This appears to us to have great value for the future, as in the hands of competent and scholarly devotees this branch of the temple work can be utilised for FREE education of the masses. When we point to the marked difference in the level of culture between the Harijans as a class and the group of "admissibles," and on that score vindicate the former's exclusion from our temples, do we suspect that it was this very exclusion that blocked from outside their natural impulse to rise up and bridge the gap ?.....As for the worship proper, it is calculated to create a sense of the Lord's presence at all times. We might wind up now, for brevity's sake, by referring to the provision made in most temples for feeding travellers or other deserving men, the standard of deserts differing in different places, but unfortunately never caring to include any one of the Harijan's type at the present day.

It has to be admitted that owing to the general degeneration that has overtaken our land, the temple, like any other institution or department of life, has ceased to be a source of strength, comfort or inspiration to the people.

Many do visit temples even now ; but they are never moved by the desire to explore all possibilities of utilising the various branches of the institution for reviving fresh vigour and courage, a spirit of original and daring research or self-sacrifice and heroism. It is not that the capacity for putting forth efforts is totally lacking, for one has only to watch with what enthusiasm, vigilance and resourcefulness people would push on with the pleasant work of securing their *own* material prospects. But the temple is unfortunately not any one's *own* in such sense, and *public* property has, as we all know, the least care bestowed upon it. In many cases genuine attempts are no doubt made to increase the prospects of the temple, but as yet the financial side alone is stressed, and that too, often not in a very praiseworthy manner. Some of the big temples have thus been literally filled with shops, and no wonder if the spirit of shop-keeping has entered the hearts of the devotees also. And what to speak of the method of letting out the cocoanut gardens of the temples for "toddy-tapping" when the best brains and stoutest hearts of the land are engaged in a life and death struggle against drink ?

But as nothing positive is gained by harping on defects of the past, let us devise ways and means for making the temple once again a fountainhead of our national virtues. Let us not forget that unless educated men enter the field with the firm conviction that this work *can* and *ought* to be done, no forward step will ever be possible ; for the rest of the public whom we have been derisively calling the "illiterate" have always been clinging to the temples in the most "obedient" fashion, though, of course, they have not shown much progress, progressive ideas not being made current among them by the

"leaders" of thought. It seems to us that if the temple is to radiate a wholesome spirit of devotion and mutual love, of Tyaga (self-sacrifice) and heroism, *proper men* should be made to officiate in all its various functions. Educated men taking up the important duties like the daily service and, if possible, dwelling in the temple precincts, devoting as much time as they could spare, for studying as well as teaching and preaching, will at once generate an atmosphere of reverence and devotion, making other desirable changes a mere question of time. Even in the most degenerate times our country has never failed to produce self-sacrificing men in abundance. If some of their modern prototypes could therefore be spotted out, brought out from their retreats and persuaded to take up their abodes at the house of God, many of the initial difficulties could be easily surmounted. Instead of feeding facilities being taken advantage of by anybody with only birth to his credit, as at present, they could more reasonably and profitably be utilised for the maintenance of these disinterested and selfless teacher-priests. Their own study and their teaching of others would be rendered easy and substantial if a well-selected set of books, if not a full-developed library itself, can be made part of every temple's equipment, appealing directly to the minds of the devotees, instead of indirectly only, as through decorations and cars and music. If it is proper to organise an office section in each temple to set right its financial and temporal concerns, its idea-spreading section, we suppose, has a far greater claim to be

thoroughly overhauled and organised on an equally western model. If this is done, we might gradually see the temple tank, for example, kept scrupulously clean, the occasional festivals conducted on more inspiring lines,—reminding one least of "fancy bazars"—and groups of people, young and old, thronging eagerly to the various Mandapams or corridors to hear the "pious" leaders discourse on philosophy (eastern and western), narrate devotional stories, or explain the ordinary matters of hygiene or the subtler processes of meditation.

If, as a modest beginning, a few trustees, trusting in the divinity of themselves *and of others*, can generously remove the present invidious restrictions regarding admission into their temples—no doubt keeping cleanliness and other conditions as safeguards to be applied in the case of every caste—and conduct experiments on the main line indicated above, posterity, we are sure, will be the richer for their daring and faith. A few blunders, "Himalayan" too, in their nature, might probably be committed by the "evolving" leaders, as it is often bound to happen during all transitional periods and experimental stages; yet experience shows that before long the Divine Hand works through these same disinterested leaders, making them smooth channels of communication by which we, the less fortunate and less disciplined brethren, may aspire to approach His benign presence, *without having necessarily to undergo the state of abject slavery all along while in this world of His.*

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# MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

VAITATHYA PRAKARANA

(Continued from Page 276)

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

There is no dissolution, no creation : there is no one bound and no one working for release : there is no one desirous of release and no one released. This is the sole truth. (32)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

This sloka is meant as a final summary of what has been said till now. When once it is established that duality is unreal (false) and that there is only one non-dual real Atman, then it also becomes clear that all worldly and Vedic experience is referable to wrong knowledge (Avidya). In that case, dissolution, creation, a person bound by Samsara or working for release or desirous of release, or a person released from the bonds of Samsara, all these cannot be true. In the absence of creation and dissolution, the real truth is that there can be no one bound etc. How can it be said that there is no creation nor dissolution ? To this we reply : because there is no such thing as duality. The following quotations from various scriptures support our contention that there is no duality : "When there is an appearance of duality" (there is danger) (Br. Up.) : "Who sees here any variety" (passes from death to death) (Katha Up.) : "All this is Atman" (Ch. Up.) : "All this is Brahman" (Mund. Up.) : "One only, non-dual"

(Ch. Up.) : "All this is what is known as Atman" (Br. Up.). Creation and dissolution can be predicated of a thing that exists and not of a thing that does not exist, as the horn of a hare. Non-duality can neither be created nor dissolved. To say that non-duality is subject to creation and dissolution, is contradiction in terms.

The objection that in Prana and other forms, there is an experience of duality, has been already met by the statement that it is a mental superimposition like the superimposition of a snake on a rope. The mentally superimposed forms of snake and other things, are not created in the rope, nor destroyed there. The rope-snake is not born in the mind nor destroyed there. It is not right to say that it is born in both (rope and mind) and destroyed in both. Similarly, as duality is mere mental superimposition (it has no birth or death). In the controlled state of mind and in (deep) sleep, duality is not seen at all. Therefore it is a settled fact that duality is mere mental superimposition. As there is no duality at all, the real truth is that dissolution and other things have no existence.

(It is objected) : If so, the purpose of scriptures (Sastras) is to deny the existence of duality only, and not to establish non-duality. For (Sastras would be) contradicting (itself) (as Sastra would be one and non-duality another). If there is authority (proof)

for establishing Advaita and if there is no duality, it would end in being a Void (Sunya). (We reply that) it is not so. What is the use of your recurring to the point which has been answered before, that without a basis such as the rope, the superimposition of a snake cannot occur? (The objector says) the illustration is not appropriate, as the rope on which is superimposed the snake, is also an object of superimposition. (To this is replied) that when all superimposition disappears, that on which there is no superimposition (that is, the superimposer) persists on account of there being no superimposition. (The objector retorts) that like the rope-snake, it is also false. (We reply) this is not so. For before the knowledge of the unreality (non-existence) of the snake, the rope was not the subject of any superimposition. Similarly, that on which there is no superimposition whatever, must be the reality. Moreover, everybody admits the existence of the person who superimposes, before there can be any superimposition: therefore, nobody can deny his existence. (In cases of superimposition) we speak of *this* rope, *this* snake etc. While the rope, the snake, etc., have different special features, what we imply by *this* always remains unchanged. So '*this*' is the real basis of all superimposition. Moreover, all disputants admit the *priority of the existence* of the superimposer and that without him, there can be no superimposition at all. So the basis for superimposition is this Atman. Even when the superimposition is shown to be unreal, there remains the Atman who is non-dual and requires no authority (Pramanam) to prove his existence. Even to deny his existence, we must predicate a conscious Atman already existing. (It is objected) if scripture (Sastra) cannot

make us understand the real nature of Atman, how can it bring about the disappearance of duality? (We reply) there is no difficulty. Just as the snake is superimposed on the rope, the whole duality (of the world) is superimposed on Atman through wrong knowledge. All such ideas as 'I am happy', 'I am miserable', 'I am born', 'I am dead', 'I have become old', 'I have a body', 'I am seeing', 'I am seen', 'I am unseen', 'I am the doer', 'I am the enjoyer', 'I receive this', 'I am deprived of this', 'I am lean', 'I am fat', 'This is mine' etc., are all superimposed on Atman. In all these superimposed conditions, the Atman remains (unchanged as their substratum). It is not absent in any of these conditions. Just as in the snake, the line of running water and other superimposed objects, the rope remains (so the Atman is, in all superimposed conditions). Therefore, as the knowledge of the real nature of the substance (Atman) is always the same, scripture has no need to create anew (the real substance.) Scripture may be able to create a knowledge which did not exist before. (Otherwise) it cannot be the authority, if it creates the knowledge that existed before (the scripture). Therefore, the obstacle to the proper knowledge of the real nature of Atman, is the superimposition on it, of such ideas as 'I am happy', etc. Emancipation is merely the realisation of the real nature of Atman. Texts from Br. Up. such as "not this, not that", "It is not gross", etc., teach us that Atman is not one on whom is superimposed ideas such as "I am happy", and are intended to remove such superimpositions. Atman exists everywhere but the qualities such as happiness, implied in the superimposition "I am happy", do not exist in all other states. Otherwise, just as the quality of coldness

does not exist in the hot fire, the qualities such as happiness came to be superimposed on Atman. (The intention of the scriptures is to remove the superimpositions on Atman, such as 'I am happy' etc., and not to assert that Atman is of the nature of unhappiness. If unhappiness is the real quality of Atman, it should be in Atman always. If Atman is by nature unhappiness, one cannot superimpose on Atman the idea 'I am unhappy'. All qualities are really superimpositions on Atman). Therefore such ideas as 'I am happy', etc., are superimpositions on Atman who is devoid of all qualities. All references in scriptures such as unhappiness, to Atman are intended to deny the attribution to Atman of qualities such as 'I am happy', etc. This is the decision of the scriptures. There is an aphorism of the knowers of Agamas (Vedas) to the effect that the authority of Sastra (scripture) is settled when it negates (the qualities that do not pertain to Atman).

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

The Atman has superimposed on his own non-dual self, numerous objects which are really non-existent. The objects themselves (are superimpositions) on the non-dual Om (Atman). Therefore, non-duality alone is of an auspicious nature. (33)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

Here is given the reason of what has been described in the previous verse. Just as on a rope are superimposed a snake, a line of water, and other non-existent objects, and just as one and the same real rope is mistaken for a snake a line of water or a stick, similarly the forms of Prana and of numerous other objects which are really non-existent are superimposed on Atman. These are not the real forms (of objects). For without the activity of the mind, no object can be perceived. The Atman is free from all activity. We cannot consider as real, those objects which are perceived only during the activity of the mind. The eternally unchanging and existing non-dual Atman forms Himself into a true and non-dual substratum like the rope, and superimposes on the substratum the innumerable non-existent objects like Prana &c. Even the objects like Prana are superimposed on the only real and non-dual Atman. For there can be no superimposition without any substratum. Therefore, the non dual Atman, without ever undergoing any change in His nature, forms the basis for all superimpositions and even during the state of superimposition, retains His non-dual form and is auspicious. Superimpositions are inauspicious, for like the rope-snake, they create fear and other feelings. In the non-dual state, there can be no fear and therefore it is auspicious.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**VEDANTA DARSAN : (In Bengali) By Professor S. N. Bhattacharyya, M.A., B. N. College, Patna. Pages 642+73, cloth-bound, Price Rs. 4 ; good printing and get up.**

The revival of Vedanta, the classical philosophy of the Hindus, is the basement of cultural Renaissance in modern Bengal. That is why the standard works on Vedanta, all of which are originally in Sanskrit, and consequently sealed boxes to the overwhelming majority of Hindus, are being translated into the vernacular. Prof. Bhattacharyya's "Vedanta Darshana" under review is one such treatise. In order to show that a convincing knowledge of Vedanta is possible only if one is taught directly by an illumined soul, the author has written the book in the form of a dialogue between a Guru and a disciple. This has made the book more interesting and readable.

Vedanta Darshana is the name generally given to the commentary of Sankara on the 555 aphorisms of Brahma Sutras of Vyasa. Sankara is the first and foremost Hindu philosopher who expounded Vedanta into a scientific system of philosophy. All subsequent Acharyas of almost all later sects of Hinduism, such as Ramanuja, Madhwa, Bhaskara, Nimbarka, Vallabha, Baladeva, Haradeva, Srikanta, etc., have each commented upon the BrahmaSutras to establish their view points, but Sankara alone is the singular exception who based his exposition on the Vedic Revelations while all others based theirs chiefly on the Puranas. Sankara has anticipated the arguments of Visishtadvaitavada of Ramanuja, Purnaprajnavada of Madhwa, Sudhadvaitavada of Vallabha, Vedabhedavada of Bhaskara, Dvaitadvaitavada of Nimbarka and Achintyabhedabhedavada of Baladeva and refuted them with subtler arguments, and has thus established his Advaitavada in a unique way. Nay, if we study Sankara's Vedanta Darshana between the lines we shall find that his intuitive genius based on superconscious wisdom had anticipated all the stand-

points of even western philosophies and found them wanting. Sankara-Vedanta does not reject any view-point as absolutely nothing. Sankara holds that from respective stand-points they are relatively real, but that from the Paramarthic stand-point of the Absolute, Advaita alone devoid of Sajatiya, Vijatiya and Swagatabheda is ultimately real. Vedanta negates no thought system but accepts them all and harmonises them according to their respective doctrine of values on the background of Advaita. Vedanta is thus the harmonising factor, the synthetic basis, the unitary symphony of all philosophies and all religions not only of the past and the present but those of the future also. Sankara thus establishes the Absolute Reality of Brahman, and propounds the theory of Maya, the much misunderstood and misinterpreted aspect of the Vedic Religion. The thoughtful reader will find for himself in these pages of Vedanta Darshana how Vedanta can supplement all thought-systems and reinterpret them in a comprehensive way.

For an Advaitist is neither a Saiva, nor a Vaishnava, nor a Buddhist, nor a Christian, nor a Muslim, nor Shakta, but he is either none or all of these. For, starting with his individual Ishtam, say, the personal aspect of Godhead he realises it and then transcends the same and reaches the Advaita or The Absolute. One is a Christian because one's Ishtam or chosen Ideal is Christ. One is a Saiva because Shiva is one's Ishtam. But an Advaitist is he who realises the transcendental Absolute beyond all personal aspects of the Divine. Thus Vedanta is the summation of all religions. And this we find exemplified almost literally in the unique life of Sri Ramakrishna. The author who has carefully studied the record-beating expansion and upheaval of modern Hinduism, beautifully remarks in the introduction that the age of Ramakrishna predominates the Hindu Religion in the new era. We beg humbly to submit that the age of

Ramakrishna prevails not only in Hinduism alone but in the whole of the religious world of today. The author sanguinely predicts (and we too endorse his views whole-heartedly) that Hindu-Vedanta with its twofold genius of absorption and expansion, will, in its modern revival, assimilate Brahmoism, Aryaism and other religious sects of New India as well as the two Semitic faiths, as it did in the past in the case of Jainism and Buddhism. If one studies the historical evolution of Indian thought and culture as a living organism, one cannot overlook the Vedic Shakti at work from the ancient times down to the modern age, in which this Shakti is most wonderfully manifest.

It is admitted by all scholars including our present author that Sanskrit, otherwise known as Deva-Bhasha or Brahma-Bhasha has such charming beauty and compelling force that the original grandeur of Vedanta is not available in translations, yet to the general Bengali public not versed in Sanskrit this book is indispensable for a proper understanding of this system.

The author has also given the literal meaning of every Sutra and appended two indices, one of the technical Sanskrit words and another of all Sutras, thus enabling the reader to master this grand philosophy independent of others. The price also is comparatively cheap with a view to popularise Vedanta. We strongly recommend this book to every Bengal student of this ancient Darshana.

**KARMA-LESS-NESS:** *By C. Jinarajadasa. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pages 138. Price Board Rs. 1 8 0, Cloth Rs. 2.*

Karma-less-ness is the author's new name for Liberation, and this book is an admirable attempt to explain how real Art achieves Karma-less-ness, unfolding the Divinity inherent in us. The true artist, we read, intuitively something of the exquisitely beautiful Plan of God and tries to body it forth here below. And by means of his detachment from his environments, by his creating the best, slowly, he begins to "dominate life." And as he so "dominates", he becomes a channel of that power, of that joy and

victory of the Perfect Artist who is God. This is the main trend of the argument followed by the author. The question is then naturally asked: what can Theosophists do to assist the artist? In each Theosophical Lodge, we are told by way of answer, there should be an atmosphere of sympathy towards artists, so that when an artist feels that the world is not inspiring him, is giving him discouragement, he can come to the Lodge, and although not a Theosophist, meet with people who recognise that the artist is the prophet of a new age to come. We wish not only Theosophists but others also to adopt such an attitude towards genuine Art.

(1) **LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME;** (2) **THE SECRET DOCTRINE INSTRUCTIONS;** (NOS. 15 AND 16); and (3) **H. P. BLAVATSKY:** *Published by the Theosophy Company (India) Ltd., 51, Esplanade Road, Bombay. (1) Pages 140. Price Re. 1. Rest Price 1 anna each.*

The first volume contains a number of letters written for solving many doubts that have occurred in an individual's practice of Theosophy. In this book it is the general spirit of the explanations, and not the details, that will be useful to the average readers, especially non-Theosophists. To cite some examples of useful hints, page 11 shows that no matter where we are, the same spirit pervades all and is accessible, change of place alone, therefore, being of very little consequence. Page 9 gives the valuable caution not to be over-anxious for results, as perturbation and harsh straining only raise barriers against progress. For the careful reader, thus, there are many passages that give food for reflection. The pamphlets on the "Secret Doctrine" are more or less annotations and can be understood only in the light of the original and of the general conceptions of Theosophy. But the pamphlet on H. P. Blavatsky will be found interesting by all readers. Besides the story of the defamation suit which she filed once against the New York Sun, it contains a fine sketch of her life entitled "The Ecstercle She", written by William Q. Judge.





Swami Subodhananda



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XIX]

JANUARY, 1933

[No. 9

## HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

सत्यं वद । धर्मं चर । स्वाध्यायान्मा प्रमदः । आचार्याय प्रियं धनमाहुत्य प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सीः ॥ सत्यान्न प्रमदितव्यम् । धर्मान्न प्रमदितव्यम् । कुशलान्न प्रमदितव्यम् । भूयै न प्रमदितव्यम् । स्वाध्यायप्रवचनाभ्यां न प्रमदितव्यम् ॥

मातृदेवो भव । पितृदेवो भव । आचार्यदेवो भव । अतिथिदेवो भव । यान्यनवद्यानि कर्माणि । तानि सेवितव्यानि नो इतराणि ॥ यान्यस्माकं सुचरितानि । तानि त्वयोपास्यानि नो इतराणि ॥

Speak the truth. Do thy Duty. Do not neglect the study of the Scriptures. Having gathered for the preceptor the wealth he desires, (thou) shouldst never cut off the thread of progeny. Do not swerve from the truth. Do not swerve from duty. Do not deviate from what is beneficial. Do not neglect the path to greatness. Do not neglect the study and teaching of the Scriptures.

Let thy mother be a God to thee. Let thy father be a God to thee. Let thy teacher be a God to thee. Let thy guest be a God to thee. Let only those actions that are blameless be done by thee, and not others. Only those deeds of ours should be followed by thee, that are good, and not others.

TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD

The Convocation Address of the preceptor to the students on the eve of their leaving his abode to take up the householder's life.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

(Continued from page 285)

### *Grades of Advaita Realisation*

**E**VEN among those who, after the attainment of Advaita consciousness in the manner described, come down from the super-conscious plane for the welfare of people at large, there are degrees of realisation of oneness with the indivisible Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, the cause of the Universe. Some have looked at the sea of spirituality from a distance ; some have approached further and touched it while others, again, have tasted a little of its water. Sri Ramakrishna often used to say, "Devarishi Narada came down after a mere sight of it from a distance, Suka Deva touched it thrice and Shiva, the Lord of the Universe, lay flat like a dead body after sipping just three handfuls of it!" To be absorbed in the Advaita state even for a moment is what is known as Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

### *Savikalpa Samadhi resulting from the Intensity of Santa, Dasya and Other Moods*

As there are differences in the depth of Advaitic realisation, so there are various stages also in the attainment of lower moods such as *Santa*, *Dasya*, *Sakhya*, *Vatsalya*, etc., or such moods as gradually lead the aspirant to the perfect Advaita

consciousness. Some are blessed with the complete realisation of any of these moods while others remain satisfied with a mere glimpse of it. The perfect knowledge of any of these lesser heights of the spiritual plane is what is called 'Savikalpa Samadhi' in the Yoga Shastras.

### *Physical Modifications invariably accompanying Mental and Spiritual Bhavas*

In all kinds of Bhava, whether of the higher type of Advaita consciousness or of the lower type, namely the Savikalpa, extraordinary changes in the body and wonderful visions are experienced by the aspirants. These physical modifications and strange revelations appear in different ways in different persons. In some these changes become perceptible with the beginnings of realisation while in the case of others very little manifestation is visible even though they may be deeply immersed in spirituality. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'If one or two elephants get down into a small stagnant pool, its water becomes tossed and violently agitated ; but in a big tank, even if scores of such elephants descend, the water remains as calm as ever.'

*Distinction between the Higher and the Lower Bhava Samadhis*

It is thus seen that physical changes or visions are not the true criteria for judging spiritual greatness. The depth of realisation has, on the contrary, to be inferred, as we have already mentioned, from the degree of steadiness, the spirit of renunciation, strength of character, control of worldly desires, etc. attained by the aspirant. How much of adulteration there is in the Bhava Samadhi can be tested in no other way than on such touchstones. Therefore, it is quite clear that a genuine and perfect development of any of such moods as *Santa*, *Dasya*, *Sakhya*, *Vatsa'ya* or *Madhura*, is possible only in those personages who are free from all material desires and have realised the pure, effulgent and free Atman, and not in those who are overpowered by lustful cravings and desire for wealth. He who is blinded by lust, can know the passionate impulses only. How can he appreciate the yearnings of a heart free from the least trace of desire?

We shall try here to relate in brief the philosophical import of Bhava Samadhi as we have heard from the lips of the Master.

*Incarnations of God alone Can Realise All Varieties of Spiritual Moods. Illustration—Story about the Master's Samadhi*

It is necessary to narrate briefly some incidents about Bhava Samadhi so that the reader may clearly understand it. From these

statements regarding the differences observed among aspirants in the attainment of *Santa*, *Dasya*, *Advaita* and such other moods, no one should infer that even the incarnations of God are bound down by limitations in the higher region of thought. They can, whenever they so desire, give in their life full expression to the *Santa*, *Dasya* or other moods. They can also advance so far in the realisation of oneness with God that the *Jivanmukta*, the *Nityamukta*, the *Iswarakoti* and other *Jivas* lie far behind them. After fully identifying himself with that Love and Bliss Absolute, it is not possible for an ordinary *Jiva* to separate himself from Him and descend again to the plane of I-ness and My-ness. Such coming down is possible only in the case of those who are known as incarnations of God. The Vedas and other religious scriptures of the world had their origin by placing on record the extraordinary experiences of such great ones. So what wonder is there that their spiritual realisations will excel, in many respects, the truths already embodied in the Vedas and other scriptures? Sri Ramakrishna often used to say "Attainments of *this* (pointing to his body, i.e., of his own self) have far exceeded all the teachings of the Vedas and the Vedanta." Being foremost among persons of this type, he could in spite of his continuous stay for six months in the state of perfect monistic identity, come back to the plane of 'I' and 'mine'—for

the welfare of the many and for the imparting of lessons to humanity. It will not be out of place here to tell the reader a few words regarding the subject.

*Brahmani's Prohibition of  
Vedantic Culture*

On the third day after his initiation into Sannyasa by Srimat Totapuri, the Master entered into the Nirvikalpa Samadhi or the final consummation in realising oneness with God, as taught in the Vedanta. At this time he had finished all the Tantric practices, and the proficient Bhairavi (whom the Master used to designate before us as Bamni) who assisted him in his

practices by procuring the prescribed things for his Sadhana and showing him the methods of using them, was staying with him at Dakshineswar. We have heard from the Master that the Bamni or Bhairavi would ask him not to mix intimately with Srimat Totapuri, saying, "Well, my child, do not associate so much with him. Their (Vedantins') ideas are all insipid. If you keep frequent company with him your sentiments and loving instincts will all disappear." But the Master was not perturbed in the least by her words and on the other hand engaged himself day and night in reflecting upon and realising the Vedantic truths.

## A POINT OF VIEW

WE wish to draw the attention of our readers to Prof. Surendra Nath Mitra's article on "Sannyasa as taught in the Gita" of which the first part appeared in the previous issue and the second part is appearing in the present one. Since the article in question raises several objections against some important principles of Sankara's system, we propose to give here a few comments on it, chiefly on Prof. Mitra's criticism of the doctrine of opposition between Jnana (knowledge) and Karma (action). In estimating how far the criticism is just, it is necessary in the first place to ascertain what Sankara means by this doctrine. Moreover Sankara's attitude in this matter can be fully appreciated only when we

view his doctrine in relation to the times in which he lived. Many an influential thinker of his day held that the *summum bonum* of life is to be attained by Karma and Karma alone. By Karma most of them meant the Nitya, Naimittika and Kamyas Karmas—in fact those ritualistic performances inculcated by the Vedas for freeing man from sin and giving him felicity in this life and in lives to come. It was held by many that the *summum bonum* consists in a happy life in this world and enjoyments in heavenly regions, followed by births again on this earth for securing merits leading to another term of heavenly life. Others who discarded this materialistic view and looked upon the *summum bonum*

as a state of changeless existence, still held that the way to it lies through the performance of the obligatory rites which are intended to remove their sins; for according to them, when the sins are destroyed, liberation would naturally follow. Whatever their view on the ultimate destiny of man, they all alike sought to bind him hand and foot to the Vedic injunctions irrespective of his mental progress, and hence refused to admit a stage of life devoted exclusively for the contemplation of the highest truth. The fourth Ashrama or the life of Sannyasa, with its characteristic exemption from all Karmas—Nitya, Naimittika and Kamyas alike—was looked upon by many of them as quite unknown to the Vedas, and even when they grudgingly admitted it a place in the Vedic scheme of life, they maintained that it was meant only for people who were weak and disabled and therefore unfit to perform Karmas or to earn their livelihood in any other way than by begging. Such was the position held by many an eminent thinker of Sankara's time—a position that directly went against the dignity of the life of pure spiritual contemplation and reduced man to the position of a slave bound hand and foot by Vedic commandments consisting of injunctions and prohibitions. It was to free life and thought from the chain of rituals that Sankara waged relentless war of polemics with the Karmakandins (ritualistic philosophers), and in so doing he too had to take up another extreme position—the incompatibility of Karma and Jnana, which was the opposite of the doctrine of salvation by work.

We shall now briefly state Sankara's criticism of the ritualists. If the ritualists look upon a happy sensuous life within the round of transmigrating existence as the *summum bonum*

and work as the means thereof, Sankara has no quarrel with them. He would however contend that such a *summum bonum* is no *summum bonum* at all according to Veda or to reason. His quarrel is really with those who associate Karma with his ideal of knowledge—the knowledge of the non-dual Self,—and contend that through Karma one can gain liberation which consists in a state of awareness where there is neither subject nor object. Sankara would say that from Karma no such result can arise. The very basis of Karma lies in the notion of duality relating to the difference of action, agent and result. Unless one is prompted by the egoistic feeling that one is the actor working for the attainment of something that is for the present different from oneself, and that there are means outside oneself for accomplishing the purpose in view, no Karma, however exalted, is possible. Moreover, the performance of Karma, also requires that one should be imbued with the consciousness of one's own qualifications or fitness for the same—a consciousness which involves the superimposition on the Atman of the idea of body, capacity, needs and other egoistic notions. How can actions whose foundations lie rooted in the consciousness of duality be a *direct* aid in rising to that level of non-dual consciousness which negates the very primary requirements of Karma? In the words of Sankara, "the knowledge of the Self, this Atman of all, which abhors all perception of difference, cannot possibly co-exist with Karma whose basis is the perception of the difference of agent, result, etc." Such being the basic opposition between Karma and non-dual consciousness, those who are established in the latter must be accommodated in an order of life that is

free from the *obligation* of discharging duties both public and private. Especially was this so in the age of Sankara when the tradition of Varnashrama Dharma was still strong in the land and it was considered sinful for an individual, and harmful for society in general, if one remained in the state of a householder without performing the ritualistic and other duties relating to one's Ashrama. Sankara therefore insists—as against those who either denied any place for the fourth (Sannyasa) Ashrama in the Vedic scheme of life or stigmatised it as the privilege of good-for-nothing people—that Sannyasa was the natural state for persons who are established in Brahman, in whom the consciousness of non-duality has engendered a natural distaste for all undertakings based on the notion of duality, as works generally are. As a general rule Sankara would also lay down that such a state of being grounded in Brahman to the exclusion of all activity is impossible for persons belonging to other Ashramas (Brahmacharya, Grihastha and Vanaprastha); for the scriptures declare they incur 'loss' (i. e., sin) by the non-performance of the works enjoined on their Ashramas. The Sannyasin, on the other hand, who has discarded all duties can suffer no loss owing to non-performance. Such virtues as are incumbent on him as the restraint of the senses and the like, are not *opposed* to the state of being grounded in Brahman, but are rather *helpful* to it. Thus, from the point of view of orthodox Varnashrama ideas, Sankara justifies Sannyasa, accompanied by freedom from all injunctions relating to work, by making the state of being grounded in Brahman (Brahmasamstha) the exclusive virtue of that order, and denying the same to the other orders because of its incompati-

bility with the mode of life required of them.

At this stage a question naturally arises, especially in this age when the rigid rules of Varnashrama Dharma have slackened to a vanishing point and the ideal of citizenship has received the place of paramountcy in the minds of men. Why should one grounded in Brahman give up his hearth and home and become a mendicant doing nothing for the good of the state or the welfare of his fellowmen? Why should he not remain in the old state itself, that of the citizen and probably of the householder too, and discharge his duties in a spirit of non-attachment and without assuming the idea of agency, as the Gita seems to ask one to do? Is not such a course of life quite consistent with the state of being grounded in Brahman? If the Sannyasin, who is supposed to have given up all actions, begs his food and performs other bodily actions like walking, sitting, speaking, etc., why should the undertaking of such actions, as are conducive to the welfare of other human beings, alone be discouraged? If the former type of actions will not affect the Sannyasin's absorption in Brahman, why should the latter alone be supposed to do so? This is the line of thought that a modern mind pursues in relation to an actionless state, and this too is the main trend of the criticism that Prof. Mitra levels against Sankara's doctrine of incompatibility of action and knowledge.

A criticism of this kind, we feel, arises from a basic misunderstanding of Sankara's point of view. Sankara is not the man to say that a person who is established in Brahman should behave only in this way and not in any other, that he should be bound by this injunction as opposed to that. In fact his vehement protest is against the

tendency of his contemporary thinkers to bring even the man of knowledge within the ambit of Vedic commandments. In Sankara's own days those who pleaded for the combination of Karma and Jnana, as against his doctrine of an actionless state, maintained that even the man of knowledge must perform his obligatory duties at least, because the scriptures enjoin them on all, and that their non-performance would therefore entail sin. Their modern prototypes enlarge this idea in the light of the current humanistic tendencies and argue that the Jnani must work for the good of society, not so much because *the Vedas* enjoin work on him as for the reason that *our modern social opinion* commands him to do so. Prof. Mitra would clothe this rather pragmatic test of perfection in more philosophical language and say on the authority of the Gita that without Loka-Samgraha (which he explains as doing good to others) perfection has not come to its real mark. This may or may not be so according to other systems of philosophy, but if one subscribes to the metaphysical principles of Sankara one cannot consistently hold to such a view. For the Jnani is *beyond all commandments, whether Vedic or social*. As Sankara has pertinently remarked, "If it be said that scriptural injunction will be his motive (for work), it cannot be, because he has realised as his Atman that Brahman who is not subject to injunction. Moreover even the Vedas are born of him and cannot enjoin anything on him." The point is that the Jnani in Sankara's philosophy stands on a level by himself, quite apart from ordinary men who are still within the domain of law. Students of modern scientific thought are familiar with the difference generally drawn between life and inorganic matter, that the move-

ments of life are quite spontaneous and unpredictable, unlike those of lifeless matter, which are guided by inexorable mechanical laws. The same is true in a more real sense with regard to the Jnani. His being has been liberated from the shackles of egoism and has come to recognise its identity with the Supreme, Changeless, non-dual Reality, free from the relation of cause and effect. The apparent spontaneity of life is manifest in him in its unmodified form. All that can be said of him is that he *may* act or he *may not*; but neither alternative can be regarded as a test of his knowledge. He may not act, because in the absence of the ego and desires he has no motive to act or any purpose to strive after. He may act too, because he being beyond the domain of law, no one can lay down a hard and fast rule with regard to him, that he *should not* work. If he acts, he does so seeing inaction in action, as the Gita itself has put it. Being identical with the changeless and non-dual Witness of the fleeting phenomena of name and form, the Self can never be said to be involved in action which means change. What acts is the psycho-physical organism, and its action is attributed to the Self by an ignorant man, because he identifies the ego with it and looks upon it as the Self. But in the case of the knowing one, the ego having disassociated itself from the psycho-physical organism and disappeared in the Self, any action that the body and the mind may do can in no sense be attributed to him, except it be from the standpoint of *ourselves*, ignorant men, *who still continue to identify his body and mind with the Self*. As for himself, he perceives the Self as quite different from the body and mind, and if any actions are performed through them he can say in the words of the Gita, that it is the *Gunas*.

that act, not the Self. Even in the case of the so-called actionless ones, the performance of bodily functions like eating, walking, sitting, etc., must be explained on this basis. Though these actions may not apparently be of significance to the world at large, there is no reason why the same explanation should not apply to them too. Hence we have to attribute the activities of the Jnani not to the impellings of the ego, but to the workings of the cosmic forces that mould the destinies of the world. In Vedantic terminology the manifestation of the cosmic forces through the individual in relation to his bodily and mental past is called the Prarabdha which is invoked so often as the explanation of the actions of the knowing one *from the point of view of men in ignorance*. The body and mind of the knowing one being supremely pure in nature due to the absence of the ego, the works that are done through him always contribute to the ultimate good of humanity. Untouched by egoism and free from all motives, even from that of doing good to the world, these actions result in real Loka-Samgraha (welfare of the world). If a person is *conscious* that he is working for the good of others, he is not a Jnani of the type that the knowledge of non-duality produces. He may be a good Sadhaka (aspirant), but not a Siddha (adept). If he is a real Jnani, the works that are done through him will invariably be in the best interest of humanity and others will say that he is working for Loka-Samgraha (good of the world), but he himself is without even this sublime motive, the most exalted one that we ignorant individuals can conceive. For, the knowing one is free from all pairs of opposites, even from love and hatred.

Sankara recognises both these types of Jnanis, those whose lives after reali-

sation are of significance for the world, and those whose lives are not so *apparently*. His Gita Bhashya (commentary on the Gita) bears out the truth of this statement. But he would emphatically protest against applying this question of work, whether it be of the nature of Loka-Samgraha or otherwise, as the *test* of the Jnani's perfection, as Prof. Mitra does. For him both these types are equally perfect, their perfection consisting not in the quantity of work that the cosmic forces do through them, but in the fact of their being grounded in Brahman. We may speak of them both as actionless too, because they are not acting in the sense men in ignorance are acting. But it must be pointed out that the so-called active Jnani and the Karma-yogi are not the same, as Prof. Mitra seems to hold. The Karma-yogi as well as the Jnana-yogi are Sadhakas, aspirants who strive for perfection through different methods; the Jnani on the other hand is a Siddha, one who has reached perfection. What is a matter of discipline and effort in the case of the first two is an accomplished fact in the case of the Jnani. Prof. Mitra contends that the Karma-yogi acts without the idea of the Self being the agent. But we think it would be more correct to say that he *tries* to act in that spirit, unlike the Jnani for whom such an attitude is not a matter of effort but a state of mind as natural as breathing. If Prof. Mitra's interpretation that the Karma-yogi is one who is already established in that attitude of non-identification with mental and physical actions be true, there is no meaning for the many passages of the Gita that speak of an ultimate goal for the Karma-yogi—*viz.*, Naishkarmya-Siddhi which consists in the complete and unobstructed recognition of the Self as unconnected with all activities.

If Sankara's view be such, i.e., if he admits that a Jnani can be apparently active too, how are we to reconcile this with his opinion on Karma-Sannyasa or the giving up of the householder's life and adopting the actionless life of the mendicant on the dawn of knowledge? To our mind the reconciliation seems to lie in the recognition of the two following points: In the first place what Sankara advocates in the case of the Sannyasin is the giving up of Vedic rituals and all other actions prompted by the sense of ego, even in its exalted manifestation as the love of mankind; for every impelling of the ego, and every passion and prejudice, however noble their effects may be from our point of view, are really signs of bondage from the standpoint of the highest Reality. By such giving up the Sannyasin, as we have already explained, may become actionless or he may act as the cosmic forces utilise his psycho-physical organism. Anyway what really takes place in the giving up of actions is the complete abandonment of the petty ego, and along with it of the idea of agency in the activities that may flow through the body and mind. In many cases the giving up actually results in the body and mind becoming better instruments for the work of human upliftment; for freed from the retarding effect of the petty ego, Nature's forces can work through them with *unrestricted freedom*. The best illustrations of this type are perhaps Sankara himself and his disciples, all Jnanis not Karma-yogis, whose Sannyasa made them only better instruments in the hands of Divine Wisdom in the work of reorganising the spiritual and social life of India. But the words *must* or *must not* should find no place in describing the conduct of the Jnani.

Again, throughout his commentaries we find that Sankara has to speak with

a double voice, as the theologian and social leader on the one hand, who had to defend and justify the scriptures of his faith and the institution supported by them, and on the other as a philosopher and spiritual genius whose mission it was to expound and uphold the principles of universal reason and the basic principles of spiritual life common to all mankind. This too has to be borne in mind if we want to reconcile Sankara's teachings on Sannyasa and knowledge. When he upholds the Vedic tradition of Sannyasa by allotting a specific function to its followers for the reasons we have already pointed out, he was at once defending an old, venerable and useful institution of his land against the unjust attacks of the ritualists and also strengthening the walls of the Ashrama ideal of life, so that the conduct of the householders in general may not go below the Vedic standard by the presence, in their order, of persons who had risen above the necessity of Vedic discipline. For if they remain in ordinary society and fail to do their prescribed duties in the proper way owing to their absorption in Brahman, their example may be followed by many a worthless imitator who has not really risen to their level of thought. But Sankara's message, it must be remembered, has more than a local significance. It has also a contribution to make even to societies that are not organised on the principles of the Varnashrama system. His ideal of the Jivanmukta can find application even beyond the Indian scheme of the fourfold orders of life; but at the time when he preached it in India, he had to present it in a form that was in harmony with the then existing social conditions in the country. In India too the argument that he advances for the formal or ceremonial taking of Sannyasa with the dawn of knowledge,

will increasingly lose significance as the peculiar idea of duties associated with the Vedic Ashramas are replaced by other principles of conduct.

It should not however be understood that we are hereby minimising the importance of Sankara's insistence on the life of Sannyasa. It is clear from what we have said that Sannyasa comes naturally for the knowing one, even though it need not necessarily conform to the Varnashrama standards in all cases and at all times. Besides this highest type of Sannyasa, known generally as Vidwat-Sannyasa, Sankara also recognises another kind of Sannyasa, the Vividisha Sannyasa, or the renunciation of those who are still in ignorance but who aspire ardently for the realisation of the non dual Self. It is these aspirants who are generally classified as Jnana-yogis, as contrasted with the Jnanis, and it is their path that is considered less preferable to that of Karma-yogis by the Gita and Sankara, not because that path is lacking in dignity or efficacy, but because it is difficult for the majority since they lack that minimum of sense-control required for the same. This path is perhaps what Prof. Mitra calls open-door monasticism, and if its door becomes too wide open it will certainly lead to abuses that the learned professor has pointed out. But when freed from these dangers, it has distinct advantages in the case of fit candidates, not merely of old men retired from active life as Prof. Mitra suggests, but even of young men—and their number is not small—who are engaged in a genuine search after the Truth. The Vedantic scriptures insist upon the Sadhana Chatusthayas, the fourfold qualifications, in the case of all enquirers after Truth. In modern terminology we may speak of these four qualifications as a correct sense of judgment

regarding Truth and untruth, freedom from hankering after sense pleasures, control of mind, and an intense desire to know the Truth. These are necessary because without these no one can gain that philosophic dispassionateness and mental ardour needed for an aspirant after Truth. Now, the life of Sannyasa, even of the lower kind, has a distinct advantage in the case of Truth-seekers in as far as it gives one facilities to cultivate these fourfold virtues. It is seldom possible for a person bound to various interests and responsibilities in life to assume that open and disinterested attitude so essential in the enquiry after Truth. It is precisely for this reason that in the case of many a so-called philosopher and metaphysician we often notice a spirit of compromise—a reluctance to push the enquiry to the very extreme limit and examine problems in their stark nakedness. A hundred desires, a hundred responsibilities and a hundred obligations make them unconsciously swerve from the straight and obvious path and wander in directions that their own prejudices point out to them. Leaving aside all the theological and scriptural notions associated with it, the life of Sannyasa still stands thoroughly justified in as far as it reduces such obstructions to the minimum and thereby facilitates the growth of the Vedantin's fourfold virtues which form an unavoidable pre-requisite of all sound philosophic enquiry. The utility of this institution is therefore continuous with the passion for Truth implanted in the human mind. Of course the introduction of an element of work, *i.e.*, of genuine Karma-yoga, into the life of such enquirers will certainly increase the social significance of such life, besides making it more balanced in working and more comprehensive in scope. Indian monasticism had been

defective in this respect in the past, but in modern times it is showing a tendency to grow in this direction.

One important point of criticism that Prof. Mitra raises we could not introduce in the discussion till now, and that is his contention that Karma-yoga is the cause of Jnana. Sankara would strongly object to this unless by cause is meant the *indirect* cause. The place of Karma-yoga in the awakening of Jnana is like that of ploughing in the growth of plants. Karma-yoga gives the necessary discipline to the mind, but Jnana springs up only from the recognition of the identity of the self with Brahman and from nothing else, Sravanam, Mananam and Nididhyasanam (hearing, thinking and contemplating), which are but the different aspects of the one mental process involved, form the only direct aids to that knowledge. To classify these aids as *actions* will only be an abuse of language involving the obliteration of the distinction between thought and action. By rejecting the claim of Karma-yoga to immediacy in the awakening of Jnana, we shall not be introducing an element of chance in the rise of knowledge, as Prof. Mitra suggests; for it is readily admitted that Karma and Karma-yoga have an indirect influence, and the creation of the conditions necessary for Sravana,

Manana and Nididhyasana may be ascribed to them.

In the foregoing paragraphs we have briefly indicated what we consider to be Sankara's view on the complicated question of the relation between Jnana and Karma. If one accepts his metaphysics, as Prof. Mitra does, one cannot escape from the ethical implications he draws from it. And these implications are, after all, when rightly understood and practised, in no way antagonistic to social well-being. That they have been abused by men of idle disposition is no fault of Sankara or his philosophy; it is only another testimony to the fact that the highest truths are liable to such abuse in the hands of incompetent persons. Whether this view of Sankara is borne out by the Gita or not is not for us to enquire at present; his great commentary on that scripture stands as his vindication. Like other great scriptures of its kind, the Gita contains instructions for people at all stages of evolution, and it is therefore quite natural that it is interpreted by different Acharyas in agreement with their different philosophies of life. Provided one can show that the scripture is in consistent agreement with one's philosophy, we believe there is no reproach in interpreting it according to one's light.

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## THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN WAKING AND DREAMING \*

(A NOTE ON A POINT DISPUTED BY GAUDAPADA AND SANKARA)

*By B. Marrs, M. A. (Oxon)*

THE subject of this essay relates to a point subsidiary to the doctrine of Maya, the theory which maintains the illusoriness or unreality of the world of our cognition as we perceive or know it. Modern scholars have, we understand, established that this conception is as old as the later books of the Rgveda. The word Maya is of later origin or use; it occurs, we have read, for the first time in the Svetasvatara Upanishad. But it has been amply demonstrated that the theory is a growth out of one of the primitive conceptions of Indian philosophy. In its form as one of the prominent tenets of the Advaita Vedanta, it receives one of its first clear expositions in the Karikas on the Mandukya Upanishad of Gaudapada, who is reputed to have been the teacher of Sankara's teacher, Govinda, and may be regarded as the Berkeley of ancient India. Gaudapada's treatise is in four parts. The first treats of the syllable "Om" the second comments on the characteristic of duality shown by our world, the third meets arguments against the Advaita system, the fourth aims at establishing the unique reality of the Atman and the illusoriness of everything else. This part is called Alata-Santi, or the putting out of the firebrand. A burning stick waved round and round in the air seems to create a circle of fire (Alata-chakra). This circle of fire does not really exist, only the point of the brand exists

though we cannot help seeing it as a circle of fire. It is not easy to see the exact significance of the simile. At any rate the multiplicity of our world, for Gaudapada, is appearance only and not reality. In demonstrating the unreality of multiplicity (the many) Gaudapada argues that our waking world, which we think real, has not more reality than our world of dreams. From the point of view of reality both are unreal though it is possible to view the waking world as external and the dreaming world as internal. For the same self they share the same unreality. Sankara sums up Gaudapada's argument more or less as follows:—

"We begin with the proposition that objects seen in the waking world are not real. The reason is because they are seen or capable of being seen, just as in the instance of objects which are seen in dreams. As objects seen in a dream are false, in the same way visibility belongs to things seen in the waking state. The conclusion is that objects seen in the waking state are also unreal or false."

In short, both classes of objects display the same falsity of presentment. The waking experience is as illusory as our dreams. "When the individual soul which is held in the bonds of slumber by the beginning-less Maya awakes, then it knows the eternal sleepless, dreamless, non-duality."

Sankara develops similar lines of thought, employing his famous similes

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\* The substance of an address given to the Vivekananda Society, Colombo.

of the rope and the snake, the magician and his tricks, the desert and the mirage, the dreamer and the dream. His object is to show that the Atman is not affected by the world's illusory appearance of existence. On the point of dreams we observe :

- (1) That the dream state is as real as the waking state so long as the dream lasts—i.e., so long as we are not by consciousness able to distinguish the dream, as such, from the waking state :
- (2) As we only make out the illusory character of our dreams on waking, so we only awake from the sleep of ignorance when we reach a knowledge of Atman and recognise then that the world is unreal :
- (3) We can only call dreams unreal and the waking world real in a relative sense. The difference between the two is not a difference in the nature of things.

It appears that Gaudapada and Sankara condemn both the waking and the dreaming worlds as illusions from the point of view of reality. But Sankara is not prepared to accept a position in which presentations are the same whether we wake or sleep. He says : " The perceptions of the waking state differ from the presentments of a dream ; the perceptions are not negated, and the presentments of sleep are negated. On waking out of his sleep, a man denies the reality of what he saw in a dream.....The thing perceived in the waking state, be it post or pillar or what it may, is never negated in any later state of mind. The visions of a dream are representations, the visions of the waking experience are presentations ; and the distinction between perception and

memory, or presentation and representation, is self-evident". Sankara is not denying that the world is illusory ; he is maintaining that, within the sphere of what is all ultimately unreal, external things are as real as the minds that perceive them. To this extent they have a degree of reality not present in dreams. " They are real from the standpoint of everyday experience". They have a kind of conventional existence. " Such conventional existence of souls and their environments is an apparent existence for the philosopher ; not an apparent existence for the many ; for them it is real enough". The apparent existence of the images of a dream belongs to a lower degree of reality (or unreality). In passing I invite the particular attention of the readers to Sankara's general theory of the relative or conventional existence of our world, which seems to mark him off from the more emphatic subjectivism of Gaudapada. His view has parallels in Buddhist philosophy e.g., in Bhavaviveka's, modifications of the Nagarjuna's rejection of the phenomenal validity of our empirical world. The Sankhya system of philosophy concedes still more to our world than this conventional reality of Sankara, and does not hold that the world is an illusion. To Sankara it has a kind of reality for "the many"; to the Sankhya philosophy it is real also for the philosopher. But that philosophy is in this respect said to depart from the teaching of the Upanishads. Gaudapada's attitude again is said by some modern Indian scholars, to have been influenced by the speculations of the Buddhist Vijnanavada—speculations which, whether in the way of sympathy or hostility, certainly appear to have been much in the minds of both Gaudapada and Sankara. The subject of this essay is thus one of deep interest

to both Hindu and Buddhist philosophers.

These preliminary references to certain Hindu philosophers have, I trust, served to introduce to the reader in a familiar shape the particular problem which I have selected for discussion, that is the distinction between waking and dreaming. Gaudapada could find no satisfactory principle of distinction: Sankara claims to distinguish between them on the ground of a theory of greater and less degrees of reality. The problem is, of course, not peculiar to Indian philosophy, though it has particular importance in the effort to differentiate Gaudapada's from Sankara's attitude towards our common world. My personal interest in it was aroused by my philosophical tutor at Oxford who saw in it an occasion for bringing out an essential feature of ordinary cognition, and of the standpoint of Kant, with certain features of whose doctrine Sankara's philosophy has often been compared. Anything original in this essay belongs to him, and I offer it, in the spirit of that Oxford and Hindu disciple-to-Guru relation, of which I have the most pleasurable recollections, as a tribute to the memory of the profoundest metaphysician it has been my fortune to meet. Kant added a consideration to the problem which was not brought out by Sankara, a consideration which vitally affects our general view of the nature of elementary cognition. The manner of distinguishing dreaming from waking, implicit, if not expressed, in Kant's standpoint, may perhaps have been adumbrated by Sankara. But a caution is necessary against what is called the *vitium subreptionis*, the tendency to read into an ancient philosopher theories or attitudes or forms of argument which are the product

of a later stage of philosophical development. This is a vice to which scholars are peculiarly susceptible both in the East and in the West. It is noticeable in our present day historians of Indian philosophy, and may perhaps have with them in part a political origin, though they are justified in protesting against the ignorance of Indian philosophy shown by earlier Western scholars. It is equally noticeable in some of our English interpreters of Plato or Aristotle, for whom Plato or Aristotle is the greater brain according to the number of texts we can find in one or the other, which can be made to support some preconception of modern philosophy. After all it is an article of faith with all who are not pessimists or misologists that the world drifts towards intelligibility and that thought did not stop with Sankara or Plato; and I believe that whatever may be the general affinities of Kant with certain ancient philosophers, Kant is responsible for a remarkable advance in metaphysical speculation.

To return to our problem: I wish to start from a reference to Plato. Plato was a rare master of the art of raising problems; and we shall not be disappointed if we search his dialogues for a clear conception of our puzzle. His pronouncement is the more illuminating because he was also a great dreamer. There are no finer dreams than the myth of Er, or the Phædrus myth, or the Creation myth of the Timæus, and it may be from a feeling that dream stories possess as great a value, if not as much truth, as waking actualities that he sometimes had recourse to the mythical form for the exposition of his ideas. Before stating the problem in his way, let us first distinguish our immediate interest from the more extended form of the

same inquiry, so familiar through early Indian philosophy, which refers the distinction between waking and dreaming to the world of life as a whole, and pronounces it, in a way often baffling to the plain man, a dream or an illusion that disguises the true waking reality of things. This attitude towards life is especially popular with poets of all ages who give their individual dreams a higher reality value than they give to the things we all agree to be the realities of ordinary waking life. They either take the world of their dream consciousness to be a revelation of "that which was and is and ever shall be," or condemn life outright as a walking shadow; a poor player,

"That struts and frets his hour  
upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more.

"We are such stuff

As dreams are made on, and our  
little life

Is rounded with a sleep."

Views of this kind begin with the ordinary contrast between waking and dreaming and end with the assertion of the reality of the latter in such a way that we have to regard the dream world as the true waking world in spite of appearances. So Shelley can say:—

"Peace peace, he is not dead, he doth  
not sleep—

He hath awakened from the dream  
of life.

'Tis we who, lost in stormy visions,  
keep

With phantoms an unprofitable  
strife

And in mad trance strike with  
our spirit's knife

Invulnerable nothings....."

He has awakened from a dream, but his waking state can only be a dream to us waking people. Or if we are dreaming when, in an apparently

waking state, we judge him to be dreaming, on what principles are we to distinguish the two states? If life is a dream, what is the quality of the dream as dream, and what the quality of Shelley's strange waking world? The poet's problem is a kind of glorification of ours. Plato was well aware that his myths were inventions and not revelations, and though Plato the dreamer mythologises to his and our heart's content, Plato the philosopher pulls himself up to inquire whether it is really possible to draw a clear line of demarcation between the two states of waking and dreaming. Sphinx-like he propounds a riddle and Sphinx-like reserves the answer. "How can you determine", asks Socrates in the *Theaetetus*, "whether at this moment we are sleeping and all our thoughts are a dream, or whether we are awake and talking to one another in the waking state?" *Theaet.*:—"Indeed, Socrates, I do not precisely know how to prove the one any more than the other, for in both cases the facts precisely correspond: and there is no difficulty in supposing that during all this discussion we have been talking to one another in a dream; and when in a dream we seem to be narrating dreams, the resemblance is quite astonishing." *Socrates*: "You see then that a doubt about the reality of sense is easily raised, since there may even be a doubt whether we are awake or in a dream. And as our time is equally divided between sleeping and waking, in either sphere of existence the soul contends that the thoughts which are present to our minds at the time are true; and during one half of our lives we affirm the truth of the one and during the other half, of the other; and are equally confident of both."

So Plato. And here is a point we must emphasise. While we are dreaming in

sleep we are not conscious that we are dreaming. As Plato puts it, "The soul contends that the thoughts which are present to our minds are true." As an error is no longer an error if you know that you are in error, so a dream exists no longer as a dream when you reflect upon it in the waking state. We might pursue the analogy further and say that as you cannot be in error (as opposed to doubt, be it understood), without feeling that you are right, so you cannot be actually dreaming without feeling that you are moving and acting in an actual world. You live, move and have your being in a dream, or appear to, just as you live, move and have your being while awake, or appear to. I dream that I am walking in London, and my dream has all the vividness of the actual experience. A dream to be a dream must seem an actual experience. You cannot distinguish between them on the score of vividness, as some do who assert the waking state to be the more vivid of the two. That will not do. "I rather suppose," with Kant (in the *Dreams of a Ghost seer*), "that ideas in sleep may be clearer and broader than were the clearest in the waking state." We do the same when we dream as when we wake. "*Quidquid luce fuit, tenebris agit.*" Often our only excitement is a nightmare which may be vivid enough to agitate us for days and days of waking life. You can feel the extremes of terror in sleep; and though when you experience the singularly dreadful feeling that you are falling into a bottomless abyss your fear may be traced to its waking origin in the anthropoid ape who fears the falling tree, the dream is intense and vivid enough to induce a cold sweat. And as my Kantian tutor said, "If the waking consciousness is to be the more vivid, we shall—with Hume—have to explain

rather urgently that "the force of our mental actions.....is not to be measured by the apparent agitations of the mind."

While we reject the distinction between waking and dreaming on the score of vividness, there are two further facts which we must take into account before we can fully realise the problem. Again I quote from my mentor: "In waking we take dreams to be hallucinatory, but in dreaming we do not take waking to be hallucinatory." Secondly, "We are sharply aware of a contrast when we wake up, but not necessarily of a change when we go to sleep." That is to say, you know you have been dreaming when you wake up: You do not know you have been awake when you begin dreaming. Oddly enough we never remember the immediate beginning of a dream. But then do we ever remember the immediate beginning of conscious waking life? We slip into dreams as we seem in childhood to have slipped into consciousness; so like a dream is life, the poet dreamer might urge. But here I would add another fact with reference to the extended problem with regard to life as a whole. We have no other state to contrast with our conscious life; whereas we have a set of experiences to contrast with our dreams. A dream implies a contrast to another state of consciousness. Can we say the same of life? And if we cannot in the end know that life is not a dream, "a great connected and consistent dream," we at least know that we cannot contrast it with a previous conscious state as we ought to be able to contrast a dream with a previous conscious state. But here I might be interrupted with the plea that the very quality of a dream is that you should not be conscious of a previous waking state or a contrast. All the more therefore, you may say, is

life a dream. Yet it remains evident that the dream of a night (as opposed to life) implies previous conscious states out of which we seem to have fallen into a different type of conscious state.

Here a solution of our riddle suggests itself. The states previous to all our dreams connect together into a coherent whole, while our dreams remain what my tutor called "lonely incoherencies: so that the waking state is coherent in a way, while our dreams are utterly incoherent." Dreams are inconsistent: waking states are consistent. So Descartes would distinguish between the two states. For by this distinction he exemplifies the truth that all things are connected in a system and the particular acquires reality through being related with everything else in the system. "I can unite the experiences of waking life.....," he says, "with all my other experiences and recollections, but not the experiences of my dreaming life." Reality can only be tested, from this point of view, by connection with other perceptions. Reality of course cannot be distinguished from mere dreaming in itself. Adam dreaming on his first night in the Garden of Eden has an experience as real as that of his first waking moment on the previous day. But his waking experience of the second morning accords, not with the dream of the first night but with the experience of the first day. If his experience of the second night accords with that of the first night, then from the point of view of reality one cannot distinguish the two appearances. "I distinguish the two," Descartes would say, "only by comparing the incoherence of dreams with the coherence of waking experience," implying, of course, what can scarcely be admitted, that two dreams of the same person are never consistent. But here is no real distinction.

For without pressing the point that it is not possible to explain the gaps formed by dreams in any attempt to give an intelligible scheme of life, we are still brought up against the possibility not only of a dreaming state being consistent with a waking state and a waking state with a dream, but of one dream being consistent with another dream. So that there are not two definitely distinguishable worlds, —one the waking world which presents an orderly series of connected events, the other the dreaming world which is simply a heap, and not a system, of isolated events (not to insist, I repeat, on the impossibility of reconciling the two worlds in a single whole which we call life). Once admit the possibility of one night's dream being connected with the previous night's (which you must admit) and the proposed distinction vanishes. What have been called "serial hallucinations" overthrow the distinction.

The consistency criterion can however be applied in a broader way. The eminent psychologist, Hoffding, suggests that in dreams there arrives a point where they cease to be systematic. "Even the most systematic of dreams" he says "is but a fragment as compared with the totality into which progressive experience conducts us." But as he himself proceeds to point out, if we accept the *reductio ad absurdum* of our experience achieved by the Gaudapadas and Berkeleys of the philosophical world, we are left with more than a bias in favour of regarding our whole waking experience as a dream, if even a connected and consistent dream. The waking world if consistent may yet in the end be as much a dream as the most inconsistent dream. We may not, in fact, have any ground to believe in either, though we may distinguish them by their respective

degrees of consistency. I say "degrees of consistency", because neither state is completely consistent, as Sankara showed. On this point let me quote again the same writer : "If ultimate consistency is intended, then all experience seems inconsistent : any spaced object, any timed happening, is still a fresh-springing comedy of contradiction",—which, of course, is what Sankara meant in denying reality to them from the standpoint of metaphysical truth, and what every philosopher worthy of the name has admitted. Even granted then a greater degree of inconsistency in dreams, we are yet at a loss for some principle on which to believe in one state rather than the other. But the question of belief is not our immediate point. This distinction on the ground of consistency is overthrown if it is even found that a dream is consistent with the waking

state. Consider the dream of our Kantian. "Let me this time" he says, "have a simpler dream : one night it seems to me that I lie in bed, and reflect on the difference between thinking and picturing : suddenly I do not remember what Kant says about Schematism : I must get up and go into the next room where there is a Kritik der reinen Vernunft lying open on the table. I read a passage, and then, happy and mystified, I go back to bed ; when I am in bed I hear the leaves of the book being turned by the breeze. Upon what principle do I later judge this to be a dream ? 'Why,' says the opponent, 'the electric light would show you if the measurements were exact enough.'" Then let the occasion have been very early in the morning at 'midsummer, when daylight should not be denied even to a believer in Kant."

(To be continued)

## SANNYASA AS TAUGHT IN THE GITA

By Surendranath Mitra, M.A., B. Sc., L.T.

(Continued from the last issue)

**T**HE doctrine of synchronal combination has the support of several scriptural texts, even other than those of the Gita.

The eleventh Mantra of the Ishopanishad \* may be translated as follows : "He who knows that Jnana and Karma are both to be practised *conjointly* (सह) attains immortality with the help of Jnana, having transcended death (i.e., the transiency of phenomenal exist-

ence) with the help of Karma." That the interpretation of this Mantra, from the standpoint of graduated selection, as given by Sankara, is too far-fetched will be evident to anybody—all the more, if it be read in connection with the second Mantra, which enjoins that one should aspire after living for a century (which means a whole life-period in the Upanishads), while doing one's Karma. In his Bhashya on the Vajasaneya Samhita (of which the Ishopanishad is a part included in the Brahmana-portion), Ubbatacharya has

\* विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभयसह ।

अविद्याया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्यायाऽमृतमश्नुते ॥

also interpreted this Mantra, as above, on the basis of synchroanal combination. Anantaoharya, too, in his Bhashya on this Upanishad, has explained it in the same way. Apararkadeva, also, in his annotations on the Yajnavalkya-Smriti, has incidentally quoted this Mantra and given it the same interpretation. In the Kathopanishad, too, the doctrine of synchroanal combination is implied in the last Mantra, which states that Nachiketa realised Brahman by having knowledge as well as all the rules of sacrificial acts\*. In the Mantra 4-4-10 of the Brihadaranyakopanishad † the synthesis of Jnana and Karma has been supported, although we find the doctrine of graduated selection also supported as an alternative course in the Mantra 4.4.22 of the same Upanishad. ‡

It is significant that no teacher of Brahmajnana in the Upanishads appears to be a Karma-Sannyasin. Yama in the Kathopanishad; Varuna, the father of Bhrigu, in the Mundakopanishad; Rajarshi Ashwapati in the Chhandogyaopanishad (5.11.14); and the Rajarshi Ajatasatru and Janaka and the Brahmana Yajnavalkya in the Brihadaranyakopanishad—they are all householders. Although, in the Brihadaranyakopanishad, Yajnavalkya is teaching Brahmajnana to his wife, Maitreyi, in one place, just before his Karma-Sannyasa, yet it is evident that he must have not only gained but also preached it, as a householder, since he adopted the Ashrama of Sannyasa after

this event. A man desirous of having, the knowledge of Brahman (Brahmavidya) is enjoined by the Mundakopanishad to approach, with fuel in his hand for the sacrificial fire, a master (Guru), who is versed in the Vedas and devoted to Brahman (1.2.12). This clearly shows that the master of Brahmavidya, as he kept the sacrificial fire, must have been a householder. It is instructive to contrast this with the idea of post-Buddhistic Hinduism, dominated by monasticism, inherited from Buddhism, that instructions in the Brahmavidya are almost a monopoly of the monks. According to a verse (Doha) attributed to the celebrated devotee, Tulsidasa, a householder imparting instructions on Brahmajnana is considered to be a mainstay of the vicious influence of the sinful age of Kali (कलिका टेक).

The doctrine of synchroanal combination has the support of the Dharma-Sutras and the Smritis, too. The Baudhayana Dharma-Sutra not only supports the synthesis of Jnana and Karma, but mentions in one place that those who praise the Ashramas of Brahmacharya and Sannyasa, as superior to that of Garhasthya would be reduced to dust (2.6.11.33-34). In the Apastambha Dharma-Sutra, too, there is a similar aphorism (2.9.24.5). The Manusmriti also supports the doctrine of synchroanal combination as alternate to Karma-Sannyasa.\* The Yajnavalkya Samhita, too, is of the same opinion. It says in one place: "Such house-

\* "लब्ध्वा विद्यामेतां योगविधिं च कृत्स्नम् ।"

† अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽविद्यामुपासते ।  
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ विद्यायाऽवर्तताः ॥"

— This is a repetition of the 9th Mantra of the Ishopanishad; both these Upanishads belong to the same Vajrasaney Samhita,

‡ एतमेव प्रवादिनो लोकमिच्छन्तः प्रव्रजन्ति  
.....etc.,

\* This is evident from the following quotations: "कर्तृषु ब्रह्मवेदिनः" (1. 97); "कर्मयोगश्च वैदिकः (2. 2); "एष धर्मोऽनुशिष्टो वो यतीनां नियतात्मनाम् । वेदसंन्यासिकानां तु कर्मयोगं निबोधत ॥" (6. 86); "वेदशास्त्रार्थतत्त्वज्ञो यत्र कुत्राश्रमे वसन् । इहैव लोके तिष्ठन् स ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥" (12. 102); etc.

holders, too, are liberated, as earn money by just means alone, are devoted to Tattwajñana, are fond of guests, offer sacrifices to the manes, and are truthful."\*

The Itihasas and Puranas, too, support the doctrine of synchronal combination as alternate to that of graduated selection, as the following quotations will show :—

"This ancient discipline has been laid down for the Brahmana that he who is devoted to Jnana is certainly liberated, *while doing Karmas*" (Mahabharata, Santiparva; 234.29; and 237.1).<sup>1</sup>

"O Rama, even bearing the burden of agency outwardly, one is not contaminated by doing one's duties that come in the natural course of events." (Adhyatma-Ramayana; 2.4.42).<sup>2</sup>

"Just as birds fly in the air with the help of two wings, exactly so the eternal Brahman is attained by the joint means of Jnana and Karma" (Nrisimha Puranam, 57.61; Harita-Smriti 7.9.11).<sup>3</sup>

"The great human Rishi, Narayana, was born to Dharma by (his wife) Murti, the daughter of Dakṣha; he gave instructions for *liberation while doing Karma*; he is worshipped by

great Rishis even to this day." (Bhagavatam; 11.4.6).<sup>4</sup>

"Karma-Yoga and Karma-Sannyasa, both of these are means to liberation; but, out of them Karma-Yoga is superior to Sannyasa." (Ganesha Gita, Chap. IV).<sup>5</sup>

"Bhakti is superior to Jnana, and Karma is superior to Bhakti." (Surya Gita; 4.77).<sup>6</sup>

Some philosophical Acharyas of our country, who flourished after Sankara, also supported the doctrine of synchronal combination. For example, Yamunacharya of the school of Qualified Non-dualism (Visishtadvaita - Vada) not only supported but also preached it. In his "Vedārtha - Samgraha," Ramanujacharya, having proved its validity, supported it by quoting Yamunacharya, Gangesha Upadhyaya, an Acharya of the school of Navya-Nyaya, supported this doctrine towards the end of his Ishwarārtha-Chintamani, although he personally did not maintain it to the end. Shreedhara Bhatta, an Acharya of the Vaiseshika school of Philosophy, was an adherent of this doctrine, though, it must be admitted that he could not support it by any quotation from Maharshi Kanada or Acharya Prashastapada. Even such a staunch advocate of Karma-Sannyasa and strict follower of Sankara as Acharya Bharati Tirtha admits in his Panohadashi that one may follow any vocation of social life, such as that of studying logic or of

\* न्यायागतधनस्तत्त्वज्ञाननिष्ठोऽतिथिप्रियः ।  
श्राद्धकृत् सत्यवादी च गृहस्थोऽपि विमुच्यते ॥  
(अध्यात्म प्रकरणम्, verse, 105).

१. "एषा पूर्वतरा वृत्तिर्ब्राह्मणस्य विधीयते ।  
ज्ञानवानेव कर्माणि कुर्वन् सर्वत्र सिध्यति ॥"

२. "प्रवाहपतितं कार्यं कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ।  
बाह्ये सर्वत्र कर्तृत्वमावहन्नपि राधव ॥"

३. "द्वान्ध्यामेव हि पञ्चाभ्यां यथा खे पक्षिणां  
गतिः । तथैव ज्ञानकर्माभ्यां प्राप्यते ब्रह्म शाश्वतम् ॥"

४. "धर्मस्य दत्तदुहितर्यजनिष्ठमूर्त्या, नारायणो  
नरऋषिप्रवरः प्रशान्तः । नैष्कर्म्यलक्षणमुवाच  
चचार कर्म, योऽद्यापि चास्त ऋषिवर्यनिषेविताङ्गिः ॥"

५. "क्रियायोगो वियोगश्चाप्युभौ मोक्षस्य साधने'  
तयोर्मध्ये क्रियायोगस्त्यागात्तस्य विशिष्यते ॥"

६. ज्ञानादुपास्तिरुत्कृष्टा कर्मोत्कृष्टमुपासनात् ॥

farming, on condition that one has a sufficiently firm faith underlying one's activities, like that of Janaka engaged in the government of his Kingdom.\* This shows clearly that the range and complexity of one's social duties that may be allowed depends only on one's strength of conviction as to the real nature of the Self (Atman).

Now, we have so far seen that Karma-Yoga and Karma-Sannyasa are two alternate paths, either of which may directly lead to liberation. Can we, then, say that both these paths are equally good?

I have already referred to two aphorisms in the Baudhayana and Apastambha Dharma-Sutras, as well as to two passages in the Surya and Ganesha Gitas, which declare the superiority of Karma-Yoga over Karma-Sannyasa. Of these, the first two books are recognised as having a high scriptural authority, whereas the last two are hardly recognised to have any scriptural authority at all. In this article, however, the authority of reason is recognised as supreme, quotations being made to corroborate reason with reference to the history of religious thought and experience. Hence, we have to judge statements—whether recognised as scriptural or not—at the bar of reason, on their own merits.

According to strict Sankarites, in general, it is Karma-Sannyasa that is really superior to Karma-Yoga, in the sense that the latter is only a stage preparatory for the former. Some exceptional individuals, however, according to them, may attain liberation without Karma-Sannyasa, in order to work out some peculiar Prarabdhas (i.e., to work out the sufferings and enjoyments due to some peculiar past

actions which have already begun to fructify before the dawning of Jnana)\*.

According to some Scriptures, such as the Bhagavatam (11. 20.6-11), both the methods are equally good, according to individual temperamental differences in the outlook of social life.

The Gita, however, differs from both these views. Sree Krishna admits, in several places in the Gita that Karma-Yoga and Karma-Sannyasa are both paths to liberation, and yet he clearly and emphatically declares the former to be superior (5. 2; 3. 8; etc.).

Now, if we look for the reason of this superiority, in the Gita, we find it in the ideal of doing good to others—Loka-Samgraha (3.20; & 3.25).†

But, here, again, it may be quite pertinently asked, 'What special purpose is served by doing good to others, even after the dawning of Jnana?' Obviously, Karma-Sannyasa is more favourable for the maturing of Jnana by preventing the wandering away of attention विक्षेपनिवृत्ति than the intricacies and the din and bustle of Karma-Yoga. Hence, the superiority of Karma-Yoga can never be reasonably maintained unless it be shown that doing good to others does some *special* good to the doer, also, even after the attainment of Jnana.

\* For example, in Panchadashi, 7. 130.

† I have taken the word संग्रह here to mean 'doing good to others'. This is a sense in which the word occurs commonly enough in Sanskrit. For example, in Manu, 8. 311, it has this meaning and Medhatithi, too, gives it the same meaning though कुल्लूक leaves it unexplained. In Valmiki's Ramayana, Kishkindha Kanda, 19. 10, too, the word is used in the same sense. This meaning is, no doubt, wider than the meanings given by Sankara and Sreedhara, although it includes them both (i.e., उन्मार्ग प्रवृत्ति-निवर्तनम्; & स्वधर्म प्रवर्तनम्).

\* "जनकादेः कथं राज्यमिति चेद्-दृढबोधतः ।  
तथा तथापि चेत्तर्कं पठ यद्वा कृषिं कुरु ॥" (7. 129).

Sree Krishna does not seem to have developed the conception of this special purpose in the Gita, elaborately enough, although he emphasises its importance throughout the Gita and characterises it as the profoundest of mysteries to be most carefully preserved (4, 3; and 18, 63-66).

Now, I venture to point out, in all humility, this profoundest secret, as the reading of the Gita suggests it to my mind, to be lying more or less implicit rather than explicit in it.

Those that are actuated by pride, anger, rivalry, arrogance and desires for individual gratification have been classified by Bhagavan as demoniacal (Asura) and explicitly characterised as militating against God in their own persons as well as in those of others (16, 18). He has also mentioned kindness to all living beings (दया भूतेषु) as a characteristic of the godly (16, 2). Add to these the wide meaning attached to the word Yajna (sacrifices) so as specially to comprehend all the social duties for the good of others, the loftiest level to which the ideal of Yajna has been raised, and the special appeal on behalf of Loka-Samgraha (good of others)—and, may we not conclude from all these that the real secret of Karma-Yoga in the Gita consists in the labours of love for the good of others, rooted in the love of God, whose best shrines are the bodies of living beings? An ideal of perfection which does not contain the element of this particular kind of love is defective, however good and noble in other respects. I am convinced, it is for this reason of the special value of this particular kind of love that Karma-Yoga has been given a higher place, in the Gita, than any other discipline for Moksha. The flame of a lamp, containing both heat and light, gives out particularly its light,

though very little of its heat, to the room in which it is kept. So, too, the other disciplines for Moksha, though they may reveal the other aspects of Brahman, fail to reveal His aspect of love (Prema or Ananda) adequately enough; while the discipline of Karma-Yoga, as conceived in the Gita, is alone competent to reveal all the aspects of Brahman. Other disciplines give the delight of mystic experiences for the personal benefit of the mystics alone; Karma-Yoga, on the other hand, is especially conducive to the universal benefit of others, too. It is just here that the special merit or superiority of Karma-Yoga lies.

In the 46th verse of the 6th Chapter of the Gita, the Karmayogin has been declared superior to the Karmis (*i. e.*, those ignorant persons who perform duties expecting individual gratification of desires), to the Tapaswis (those that perform austerities, remaining isolated from the society), and even to the Jnanis. In the immediately next verse, and in the same context, it is again said that of all the Karma-Yogins that person is the best who, with faith and love, is devoted to God as his innermost self. From these it is evident that religious persons of the highest order of perfection are those who, with faith and a passionate and undivided love, worship God *through the widest possible range of social duties*, consistent with their Swadharma (individual capacity).

In emphasising the importance of duties of the widest possible range, although the element of Jnana involved in the Karma-Yoga has been quite fully developed in the Gita, yet the element of love has not been developed in it fully enough—the love which attracts even the Adhikarikas and God Himself to work for the welfare of all living souls—the love in the freedom of which

the duality or contradiction of bondage and liberation is annulled—the love in the indifference of which to Moksha, even Moksha of the most perfect type conceivable is realised now and here. But we find the conception of this love expressed in a highly concentrated form in the passage, "that great soul is extremely rare to whom all is Bhagawan Vasudeva"—वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः (7. 19)

The traditional ideal of Jnana-Yoga with its persistent emphasis on Karma-Sannyasa, and the traditional ideal of Bhakti-Yoga narrowing down its range of duties within a miserably poor boundary—both of these have missed this special teaching of the Gita. Even the very choicest sons of the country have been devoting practically their whole energy to the possession of the privilege, if not the luxury, of the personal enjoyment of mystical experiences peculiar to these two disciplines, keeping themselves aloof from the most burning problems of the country even when the house of the whole nation has been on fire. Buddhism and Jainism, too, have committed the same mistake in their own ways. Even Buddhism—with its nobly conceived and wonderfully developed humanitarian activities, and with its ideal of Bodhisattva boldly refusing to be emancipated from the round of births and deaths till not even a single living being in the universe remains to be helped in attaining Nirvana—could not understand, or discover for itself, this profound mystery of the Gita, so as to make the most vital organs of the social organism function for the preservation of an adequate virility of the nation. Sankara, true to his inheritance of the Vedic Culture, frankly admitted, no doubt, that the preservation of the Vedic Dharma depends on the Kshatriya power strengthened by

Karma-Yoga \*. But, alas, even he, too, in spite of his acute intellect and keenest insight, could not foresee—perhaps mainly due to the influence of Buddhist monasticism of his age working in his mind—that his subordination of the Karma-Yoga of the Gita to his Jnana-Yoga dominated by Karma-Sannyasa, would only help to accelerate the enervation of the already degenerating Kshatriya-Spirit of the country, leaving the whole nation with its Dharma at the mercy of the greed and worldly ambition of the more powerful and more efficiently organised foreigners.

The ideal of Karma-Yoga of the Gita, thus understood from the standpoint of the doctrine of synchronal combination, seems to be the only way of salvation for India in particular, and of the salvaging of religion, in general throughout the world, at this critical period, when neither monasticism nor mysticism that are indifferent to and isolated from duties for the social good, including also the political, can appeal to the modern minds. That even politics can be highly spiritualised and sanctified into a religion is being amply demonstrated before our eyes by Mahatma Gandhi, who has not only interpreted the Gita from the standpoint of synchronal combination but has also been living it as he has interpreted it. The teachings of the Gita have appealed to many master-minds of the West, such as Emerson of America, only when understood from

\* "इममध्यायद्वयेनोक्तं योगं.....आदित्याय सर्गदौ प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययं जगत्परिपालयितृणां क्षत्रियाणां बलाधानाय । तेन योगबलेन युक्तस्ते समर्था भवन्ति ब्रह्म परिरक्षितुम् । ब्रह्मक्षेत्रे परिपालिते जपत्परिपालयितुमलम् ।"

(Gita-Sankara Bhashyam: 4. 1.

the standpoint of synchronal combination. Even Tolstoy, independent of the Gita, translated the religion of the Sermon on the Mount into a discipline essentially identical with the Karma-Yoga.

It should not be inferred, however, that Karma-Sannyasa may not have any value at all in our religious lives. After one has devoted to the good of humanity the most vigorous part of one's life, to the utmost of one's capacity, in the spirit of Karma-Yoga, one may retire into a Karma-Sannyasa of the *pre-Buddhistic Hindu type*, or into a monastery, or into a Bhakti-Yoga of the traditional type to enjoy and make the best use of a well-earned and well-deserved rest. Such a Karma-Sannyasa has a delicate and serene beauty, most highly genuine, which nobody can dispute. There may be also some rare able-bodied and able-minded individuals, incorrigibly disgusted with social life, who may be benefited by an *individual Sannyasa of the pre-Buddhistic Hindu type*. A few such rare cases can do no harm to society; rather they may add to the zest of life. But an open-door monasticism would only pander to laziness, and an open-door Bhakti-Yoga to a sloppy sentimentality mixed with laziness, especially intellectual, cowardice being often added to both.

It should be mentioned, however, in conclusion, as a warning, that Karma becomes dangerous if it comes in the way of development of Bhakti and Jnana, as it certainly does if it be not properly alternated with adequate doses of contemplation. This is why Sree Krishna instructed Arjuna in Dhyana-Yoga in the Sixth Chapter of the Gita. The Bhakti and Jnana derived from contemplation can be the only safe foundation of Karma, through which, again, they can enrich and develop themselves to their ideal fulness emphasised by Bhagavan Sree Krishna. In practical religious life, however, people should emphasise one or the other of the three elements in various ways and mix them up in various proportions, according to the peculiar demands of their individualities, and consistent with the principle of economy, *i. e.*, with the purpose of acquiring the maximum possible success with the minimum waste of time and energy. Here no definite rule can be set down; but there is no doubt that the method of trial and error, faith, perseverance, a crucial self-analysis, sincerity and a child-like open-mindedness to truth—come from whichever quarter it may—are certainly among the essentials. After all, religion is an art—nay, it is by far the grandest of all arts—it is the art of arts,

(Concluded)

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# THE RELIGION OF OUR YOUNG MEN

*By N. Kasturi, M. A.*

**B**OSWELL once asked Johnson, while on the problem of education, which subject a boy should learn first when he went to school. "Sir," replied he, "while you are debating which of two subjects your boy shall learn first, another boy learns both of them." While we are yet discussing what type of religious instruction our young men are to receive and at what ages and by what agencies, they have already secured pronounced views on religion and the good life, which confront us at the very outset of an endeavour.

Some time ago, the present writer had occasion to investigate these views held by our young men and as the results might be of some interest, an attempt is made to summarise them here. Two hundred young men, belonging to various religions as well as the sects thereof, were required to write essays on each of the following four subjects—"What is your idea of God?" "When will you call a man religious?" "What do you expect a good man to be?" and "Why should we be good?"

The answers revealed that the young men (their average age was 17+) have a surprising sense of freedom and curiosity as well as faith. About 22 were frankly atheistic, dismissing the idea of God as 'an obstacle to happiness,' 'an assumption,' 'a superstition,' 'a falsehood, a vision, a hypothesis.' One student wrote, "You are born with a brain; make use of it. Don't wander in quest of God. Be careful or your God may turn out in the end to be your own Ghost!" But more than 75

students recognised that God was the Supreme Master or Creator, governing the Universe with His own inexorable laws and judging men according to even scales of justice. He was the guardian of Heaven and Hell, the Highest Officer, the 'Supreme Autocrat,' the 'Eternal Dictator.' Some said He could rule the world and dispense justice only according to the laws of Karma. One answer was typical of many. "Ancient Rishis have written many volumes about God. If all that they say is true, then God is partial and terrible. I think many of them had not seen Him and their imagination must have been very powerful. I do not say there is no God. When we see this wonderful creation, we can easily infer that there must be a God behind everything. The best way to see God is to serve humanity and all other living things, so that we may prepare them for better Karma. Other forms of worship are mere forms of bribery." About 150 students, however, wrote of God as a supernatural Spirit, a formless Super Soul, an all-pervasive, all-embracing force or energy, an indescribable Absolute. About 15 described Him as the Perfect Man, beautiful beyond description and personifying love and truth.

These answers reveal not only temperamental differences but also undisclosed reserves of reverence and faith and of readiness to listen and learn. The raw materials of a religious faith are there in plenty. And this, in spite of the absence of any conscious 'religious' training either at home or in school,

The essays on the 'Good Man' disclosed a passionate adherence to social service programmes, a sincere devotion to humanitarian enterprises and an eager sympathy with the currents of constructive nationalism, to the almost universal exclusion of other 'virtues'. The good life was in short the life of service. The old call to serve God seems to have given place to the new call to serve Man!—or, to have been identified with it. Love of one's fellow-beings, readiness to sacrifice for their sake—these are mentioned as the criteria for pronouncing a man, 'good' by 162 of the 200—adherence to Truth and courage in the face of misfortune, coming immediately after in the order of popularity.

Another significant feature of the essays was that 'a religious life' was almost universally condemned, except by about 50 students! The reason, of course, was that they took 'religious life,' to mean, a life led in strict slavish conformity with the rituals and formalities of an established religion. The words 'religion' and 'religious' have somehow come to be associated with exclusive and hollow performances, divorced from actualities and our young men, conscious of the currents of contemporary thought, have taken the cue in condemning temples, priests and Purohits, as "religious."

But they have not lost their moorings, however. Their insistence on the good life lived under the shadow of a great Taskmaster or in conformity with a Law of Beauty or Truth comprehensible only through higher levels of consciousness, is proof enough of that. The answers to the question, "Why should we be good?" are very interest-

ing on account of their variety. "To escape degradation to the level of the beast," "to enjoy life fully," "to conquer the beast in us," "to please Mahatma Gandhi," "to get Heaven," "to escape Hell," "to get good done to us"—are some samples. This variety was due to an inability to base "the desire for a good life" on any understandable "philosophy of life."

The problem for the educationist is therefore simple. He has to face facts and welcome the new urge towards a larger, freer and fuller life of expansion and service. He has to provide for our young men a philosophy of life that will sustain this humanist craving and that will stand the strain of disappointment or failure. Opportunities have also to be provided to translate this desire for social service into real action, however small, for an unfulfilled desire leads to repression and serious mental disturbances. What is therefore needed is a foundation of faith and a super-structure of concrete social service.

Swami Vivekananda has shown how the Vedanta philosophy can sustain faith in man and in service to man as the manifestation of the Divine. He is the apostle of Practical Vedanta; the prophet who dared proclaim—"mūrkha dēvo bhava; daridra dēvo bhava," who made the worship of Daridranarayana as holy and as essential as the worship of Narayana Himself. Surely, it cannot be beyond our capacity to draw from his life and works inspiration enough to learn this philosophy and to impart it to our students! As regards programmes of social service, let us emphasise on *quality* and not *quantity*—only, let the young men *do* something concrete, rather than grow warm over words.

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# A SYNTHETIC STUDY OF VEDANTA

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B A., B. L.

**D**R. Saroj Kumar Das has, in this volume\* comprising his Sree Gopal Basumallik Fellowship Lectures for 1929, assayed a great task and done it well. Sri Vyasa's Brahma Sutras were meant to be a point of convergence and became a point of divergence. It may be that the departures and divergences are deep rooted and inevitable. There are many who think so. But it was the great life-work of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa to live and prove the contrary. Unless one thinks that the last word on Indian philosophy has been said, one should not shut up new thinkers and writers who try to strike out new pathways by new synthetic combinations of old ideas, even if they do not blaze a new trail.

There have been four different types of mind working in such a new direction. Maxmuller and Deussen and Keith and other European scholars have studied and interpreted Indian thought in their own way without any direct touch with Indian Pandits. Woodroffe and others have been studying and interpreting Indian thought with the help of Indian Pandits. Indian scholars of a daring and liberal type of mind have been striking out paths of their own. Men like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Vivekananda and others have tried to recombine the prismatic colours of later Indian thought into the white splendour of earlier Indian thought without any violent breach with tradition and with-

out any scorn for their predecessors in a spirit of "constructive criticism" to use Sir S. Radhakrishnan's illuminating phrase.

Mr. Das says that he learnt the value of the comparative method from his master, Sir Brajendra Nath Seal, and points out the real weakness of that method when he says in his Preface: "The so-called comparative method, which makes out its sole concern to pick out the points of affinity to the utter neglect of the points of divergence between systems of thought, Eastern or Western, may surely be said to have missed its vocation. But a comparative method to which the points of difference and divergence and departure are all-important and which clings to trivial points as being vital points, surely misses its vocation too." The heart of the whole thing lies in the answer to the question as to whether there is an inclusive unity called Hinduism or the Aryan faith in which the different schools of Vedanta have their place, or whether they must try to eat up each other till one remains like Aaron's serpent. "Vedanta" is a well-known word. The Lord says in the Gita that he is the Knowable declared in the Vedas, that He is the maker of the Vedanta and that He is also the knower of the Veda, वेदैश्च सवरहमेव वेद्यः वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाह। Hence all the schools of the Vedanta declare only different aspects of Him. We must go to Him for the light of synthesis and then He will light in our hearts the lamp of knowledge.

नेषामेवानुक्तपार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।

नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्यो ज्ञानदीपेन आस्वता ॥

\* Towards a systematic study of the Vedanta: By Dr. Saroj Kumar Das. Published by the University of Calcutta.

Mr. Das says well that "philosophy is but life brought to the focus of self-consciousness". If, therefore, the Vedanta is the Hindu life brought to the focus of self-consciousness, its supreme value as the mirror of the national soul is indisputable. Max Muller says that "it is clearly the native philosophy of India." He says further, "With the Hindus, the fundamental ideas of the Vedanta have pervaded the whole of their literature, have leavened the whole of their language, and form to the present day the common property of the people at large." The entire realm of the wonderful domain of Indian Aesthetics—which by the way, is almost as broad and as remarkable as the domain of Indian Metaphysics—has been pervaded and leavened by the ideas of the Vedanta. In fact Viswanatha says in his famous *Sahitya Darpana* :

सत्त्वोद्वेकादखण्डस्वप्नप्रकाशानन्दचिन्मयः ।

वेदान्तरस्पर्शशून्यो ब्रह्मास्वादसहोदरः ॥

It is rather puerile to try to settle the pre-eminence of this or that school of the Vedanta by saying that Vyasa affirmed its correctness; the life of each Acharya affirms such an incident. Each one of us may say that he likes this or that system most. But for God's sake let us not appeal to such legendary external tests. Let us test and prove each system by the test of reason and by the test of revelation in a spirit of friendliness and charity and inclusiveness which admits of preferences but not carping criticism of downright abuse based upon a spirit of perverted antagonism and irritated and irritating dislike and aversion.

Mr. Das rightly points out that the Vedanta is not a mere Sunday faith or a happy euthanasia or even mere mystical intuition. Some abuse it as being too intellectual and others abuse it as truckling to morality and

ceremonialism and yet others as debasing philosophy to the level of religion. Some deery it as being too pragmatic and practical while others deny it as being too theoretical and unrelated to life. In fact it moves on smiling (प्रहसन्निव) as the Lord Sri Krishna smiled when assailed by Arjuna's self-contradictory and self-destructive exposition of Dharma. In India faith and practice have been a unity, and philosophy and religion have been a unity as well. If the West has pronounced a decree *nisi* or a final decree of divorce between those whom God put together and man has no right to put asunder, how is India to blame for keeping together those whom God put together?

In his introductory chapter Mr. Das places his finger rightly on some of the vital elements of the Vedanta but not on all of them or with equal and transparent clarity. The Vedanta affirms the existence of the soul. As Sri Sankara says in his *Sutra Bhashya* (II, 3, 17): "अस्त्यात्मा जीवाख्यः शरीरिन्द्रिय पञ्चराध्यक्तः कर्मफलसंवन्धी ।" The various subsidiary schools of the Vedanta may differ as to the *Sodhana* (शोधन) or clarification of the final and absolute nature of the soul, but not one of them ever doubts the *Sariraka* or *Dehi*. All schools of the Vedanta affirm also the reality of the spiritual freedom and bliss of the soul. Whether the *Iso-panishad* declaration *योसाऽवसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि* means really identity or body-soul relation or mere similarity (with the idea of gradation subjoined), we need not now pause to discuss. We find a similar ascent of thought in Christianity from the awed submission to Jehovah to the affirmation that "I and my Father are one," and from an external sovereignty of God to

the realisation that, "the Kingdom of God is within you." The Vedanta lifts up the soul from penance and propitiation and prayer to perfection. Further it unwaveringly and unhesitatingly declares that the world is a God-made world and not a mere self-made or self-propelled mechanism or a sport of chance or a freak of time.

स्वभावमेकं कवयो वदन्ति कालं तथान्ये परि-

मुह्यमानाः ।

देवस्यैष महिमा तु लोके येनेदं श्राम्यते ब्रह्मचक्रं ॥

Lord Sri Krishna refers clearly to His *Apara Prakriti* and His *Para Prakriti*. This is a vital point of the Vedanta, whether the final reality is the *Parinama Vada* or the *Vivarta Vada*. Another vital element of the Vedanta is its clear and conclusive statement that the centre and heart of being is Bliss (*Ananda*), आनन्दं ब्रह्मेति व्याजानात् ।

Mr. Das rightly refers to "the distracting varieties of commentaries—Sutras, *Karikas*, *Bhashyas*, *Anubhashyas*, *Varttikas*, *Vritis*, *Tikas*, *Saras*, *Samgrahas* and the like." In fact there are many brands of *Advaita* and *Vishishtadvaita* and *Dvaita*, each brand having its own polemic and its own weapons of attack and of defence. All appeal to the *Prasthan Trayā*, i.e., *Srutiprasthanam* (*Veda*), *Smritiprasthanam* (*Gita*) and *Nyayaprasthanam* (*Vyasa's Brahma Sutras*). All of them accept the *Mimamsa Nyayas*. All of them accept the other *Darsanas* so far as they agree with the Vedanta. Mr. Das appeals for an attempt to harmonise the three *Prasthanas* and protests against "introducing an unhappy breach into the *entente cordiale* and abetting a domestic quarrel among the members of the otherwise happy family, and thus undermining the family solidarity." At any rate if there must be a communal award, I

would go to Mr. Das rather than to Mr. Maxmuller. He quotes *Sadananda* who says in his *Vedanta Sara* : "वेदान्तो नामोपनिषत्प्रमाणं तदुपकारिणि शारीरिकसूत्रादीनि-च". The *Gita* is the *Upanishadsara* (*सर्पोपनिषदो गात्रः*). Of course each man will canonise the later works as he likes. Mr. Das rightly points out that we must once again go to the *Rishis* of the *Upanishads* and to *Sri Krishna* to find out the main points of the Vedanta, though each may add such subsidiary contribution of accessory doctrine as he likes best. About the *Sutras* in general it has been said that one of their characteristics is being *विश्वतोमुख* (having many faces). But all the faces must be set upon on a common neck and chest. There is, of course, the danger of *latitudinarianism* in such a mentality. There might be confusion in having a loose amalgam of contradictory ideas. *Sri Sankara* says : कस्यचित् क्वचित् पदापाते सति पुरुषमतिवैश्वरूप्येण तत्वाव्यवस्थानप्रसंगात् ॥ But this should not be a ground for refusing to make any synthesis at all or for abusing such synthetic endeavours. Judge such synthesis on its merits just as you judge each system on its merits. Give such synthesis makers also the privilege of claiming to have *Brahma Jijnasa* and *Brahma Mimamsa*. Do not claim to have a monopoly of it for yourself alone.

My quarrel with Mr. Das is not in regard to the above mental attitude but is in regard to his submissive acceptance of the western theory about an imaginary breach between the *Rig Vedic* and the *Upanishadic* age. I do not now canvass the orthodox theory about the whole *Sruti* being above time and space and being *nitya* (eternal) and *apaurusheya*. I rest the integrity of the *Veda* and its claim on our investigation of it in an integrated mood on another ground. The *Rig Vedic Rishis*

and the Upanishadic Rishis are Rishis, i.e., truth-seekers and truth-finders who sought and found the Highest. Who are we to introduce a division into that happy family—to use Mr. Das's own fine idea? Mr. Das speaks of the "child-like naivete," "the sunny pagan temperament" and "the somewhat riotous fantasy" of the Rig Veda. This is surely damning with faint praise. The Rig Veda, no doubt, largely contains *mantras* addressed to various gods. The Yajur Veda refers largely to sacrificial details. The Sama Veda adds musical chanting to hymnology. The Atharva Veda dwells largely on spells and incantations. What if they do so? Why should we set up a hierarchy and gradation among them? Not only does the Rig Veda declare: एवं सदिप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति। The Rishi Vama-deva realised that it was he that became Manu and Surya (अहं मनुश्च सूर्यश्च).

Nay, it is stated in the Rig Veda :

आद्रे ज्वलति ज्योतिरहमस्मि ज्योतिर्ज्वलति  
ब्रह्माहमस्मि योहमस्मि ब्रह्माहमस्मि अहमस्मि  
ब्रह्माहमस्मि अहमस्मि ब्रह्माहमस्मि अहमेवाहं मां  
जुहोमि स्वाहा ॥

In the Yajur Veda it is said :

अहं त्वदस्मि मदसि त्वमेव तत् ममासि योनिः  
तव योनिरस्मि ॥

The Western scholars may please themselves by talking about "the twilight of the Gods" in the Rig Veda. Professor Keith may speak of "the positive side of the tendency of the Rig Veda to dissatisfaction with the Gods of tradition." But why should we talk patronisingly about "the prolific myth-making of the Rig Veda?" Why should we, with a superior air, call it mere "poetry" or mere polytheism?

Perhaps Mr. Das and others of his school may say that, if we apply histo-

ric spirit, we must affirm that the Rig Vedic Rishis occupied lower levels of perfection than the Upanishadic Rishis. Lord Morley once pertinently pointed out that in the realms of philosophic and religious thought there is no proof that the later must be the better and stated that Plato overtopped all the later thinkers. There is no use in inventing new words ending in *ism* (such as pluralism, polytheism, henotheism, kathenotheism, syncretism, pantheism, panentheism, monotheism, monism, solipsism, etc.) and bewildering and bamboozling our minds. Sayana, who is our only sure and reliable guide in Vedic interpretation, says that from the *adhidaivika* point of view the gods have diverse functions and different, but are one from the *Adhyatmika* point of view. A god is he who gives, who shines, who is above. Yaska says in his Nirukta : देवो दानाद्वा दीपनाद्वा द्योतनाद्वा बुस्यानो वा भवति । The Nirukta says that the gods are but the limbs of God (एकस्यात्मनोऽन्ये देवा प्रत्यंगानि भवन्ति). Can there not be such a unity in variety? Even the Sun-god has many forms and names according to the diversities of his function (Mitra, Pushan, Surya, Savitor, and so on). The Nirukta says : एकैकस्या अपि वह्निना नामधेयानि भवन्त्यपि कर्मप्रयत्नवात् ।

I believe that the world of essence or absolute Being was as present to the minds of the Rig Vedic Rishis as the world of manifestations was present to the minds of Upanishadic Rishis. Vedanta does not mean a later departure from the Veda but is its essence and its culmination (*Sruti Siras*). In fact Sri Rama says in the *Muktikopanisad* which is the best of the Upanishads :

तिलेपु तैलवद्दे वेदान्तः सुप्रतिष्ठितः ।

I believe that here must be found the real solution of the Chinese puzzle in

the Rig Veda. The Rig Veda invokes each god as Supreme. Vishnu-worshippers may seize upon the passage which calls Vishnu as *Parama* or *Prathama*. Agni-worshippers, Siva-worshippers and others may seize upon similar passages praising the deity of their choice. In Rig Veda I, 50, 10 the sun is described as having three forms i.e., the dispeller of terrestrial darkness, the shining god in heaven, and the Supreme Being. Today, no doubt, Brahma has few or no worshippers. But the Veda says : *हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्ततामि* । Our private passions are not the gateways of Truth.

I can make only a brief reference to the other ideas in this valuable work, lest this review should swell to the size of a book. The author analyses with care and fine perception the Vedantic experiences broad-based on *vichara* and culminating in *anubhava*, and the four states of *jagrat*, *svapna*, *sushupti* and *tureeya*. The clear analysis of these states is one of the special glories of the Vedanta. Equally remarkable is its affirmation of the eternal *chaitanya* which is the witness of all the states. As Vidyaranya says in his famous *Panchadasi* :

नोदेति नास्तमेत्येषा संविदेका स्वयंप्रभा ॥

Mr. Das has clearly analysed also the *Adhyasa Vada* and the various *khyatis*.

The Advaita dialectic is elaborately dealt with by Mr. Das. The ultimate verity is Pure Consciousness (*Bodha*) or *Suddha Chaitanya* which is the self-manifest subject (स्वयंप्रकाश) and which is undifferentiated (निर्विशेष) and eternal and changeless (कूटस्थ) on which, in our state of *avidya*, we superimpose (*adhyasa*) the manifold variety of the fleeting and evanescent world. All is *Parinama* in the phenomenal world but there is only *Vivarta* from the standpoint of the Absolute. This is what is meant by the declaration that the rela-

tion of Brahman to the universe is अनिर्वचनीय (indefinable) and is neither *sat* nor *asat* nor *sadasat*. *Avidya* is of the nature of *भाव* and not *अभाव* but is removable by *Jnana*. Chitsukhi says well : *अनादिभावरूपं यद्विज्ञानेन विलीयते* । This *Maya* is not तुच्छ or emptiness or nothingness (अभाव). It has two aspects, viz., *Avarana Shakti* which hides the real nature of Brahman and *Vikshepa Shakti* which projects the relative reality of the universe. What is called *Avidya* from an individual point of view is called *Maya* from the cosmic point of view. *Avidya* is जीवपदा ब्रह्मविषया । *Maya* is देवीशक्तिः अव्याकृतनामरूपा नामरूपयोः प्रागवस्था । From one point of view it is really non-existent (या सा सा माया). From another point of view it is Isvara's Power (परमेश्वरीशक्तिः). Brahman is the efficient cause and the material cause of the universe (अभिन्न-निमित्तोपादानकारण). Brahman with *Maya* as *Upadhi* (limitation) is called *Isvara* or *Saguna Brahman*, just as the *Avidya Upadhi* is responsible for the *Jiva* concept. If we exclude all *Upadhis*, Pure Being alone remains. The following well known verses sum up these views :

श्लोकार्थेन प्रवक्ष्यामि यदुक्तं ग्रन्थकोटिभिः ।

ब्रह्मसत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ॥

अस्ति भाति प्रियं रूपं नाम चेत्यंशपञ्चकं ।

आद्यतयं ब्रह्मरूपं जगद्रूपं तथा द्वयं ॥

मायाविद्ये विहायैव उपाधी परजीवयोः ।

अखण्डं सच्चिदानन्दं परं ब्रह्म लक्ष्यते ॥

Against this formidable dialectic, Sri Ramanuja and, later yet, Sri Madhwa led their forces of attack. It is neither possible nor desirable to go into the subtleties of attack and defence on this point. That task must be left to the determined followers of this or that school. Other vexed problems are the question whether creation is due to

Swabhava or Ananda or Leela or Kripa of God, and the question of the relation of these concepts to Adhyasa and Vivarta and the further question of the relation of the concept of divine Leela to the concept of Jiva Karma and the relation of the concept of *Dukkha* to the concept of *Rasa* or *Ananda*. Yet other vexed problems are raised by the *Abhasa vada* and the *Bimba-pratibimba vada* and the *Avalokita vada*. We have yet other puzzling problems which are expressed by *Eka-jiva vada* and *Anekajiva vada* and by *Drishtirishiti vada* and *Srishtidrishti vada* and so on. Mr. Das has plunged into these discussions in a general way which may not satisfy this or that critic but which shows the intricacy of the subject.

Mr. Das has done a signal service in showing clearly that the Vedanta is broad-based on morality. Dr. Deussen once admonished Indians thus: "The Vedanta in its unfalsified form is the strongest support of pure morality. Indians! Keep to it". But it is now the fashion to say that the Vedanta

does not stress morality. The Supreme realisation of the eternal and infinite Atman is affirmed by the Vedanta to be higher than a mere Dharmic life, but it will never come to an *adharmic* and undisciplined nature. The Vedanta clearly affirms the need to follow the path of *Sreyas* rather than the path of *Preyas*.

Fascinating though the subject be, I must bring this review to a close. Mr. Das has written in a clear and beautiful style and in a synthetic spirit, a very readable and erudite work on the Vedanta and the Indian public must be thankful to him for such an able and convincing presentation of a noble theme. In his well known work called *Prasthanabheda* Sri Madhusoodana Saraswati shows a method of reconciliation of the *Shaddarsanas*. It was reserved for Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa to show a method of reconciliation of the three primary schools of the Vedanta. In the synthetic study and presentation of the Vedanta lies the future unity of India and the future spirituality of the world.

## AN UNJUSTIFIABLE DOUBLE STANDARD

By S. N. Suta

critical hour has arrived in the history of the Hindus. Till now they had been, so to say, merely drifting with the current. English rule had brought peace and security, and opened out diverse avenues of progress whereby the clever and the deserving could forge ahead of their fellows and acquire for themselves wealth or power, honours or titles. No wonder, then, that those who inherited the capital advantages of the mental discipline of a long line of really orthodox high caste

ancestors, fitted themselves easily and exactly into the new machinery and availed themselves of all the opportunities it provided. The public schools, the competitive examinations for Civil Service, the preference given to the degree-holders of English Universities, the various Government posts with their steady salaries and tail-end pension, the Banking system and the comparatively more secure investment afforded by Joint Stock Companies, the rapidly swelling trade in foreign articles

which were increasingly becoming fashionable owing to the spread of Western culture—all these, and many more, drew out the higher castes who had already given up the *spirit* of Vedic studies, if not the surface perusal of the texts, and flung them, as never before, at one another's throats in an indiscriminate competition for wealth and honours. The more the competition waxed, the less became the study of the scriptures, and of course much less the observance of their spirit. Orthodoxy, we may be sure, was agitated in the beginning, but learned to welcome it in course of time as material advantages began to accrue from the new ways, till at last it has now fallen into the dangerous mentality of believing that it has not changed at all, and that it is still as orthodox as it was meant to be by the ancient law-givers. Nay, it has imperceptibly and almost unconsciously gone to the cruelly absurd length of applying the *letter* of those good old laws for depriving weaker people of their civic rights, while it has, in the interests of its own money-making, transgressed those very laws *in letter as well as in spirit*. If it were not for the tragic effect upon the down-trodden poor, one could find only cause for amusement at the misgivings which some well-meaning men among the orthodox entertain regarding the recent movement for the temple entry of the Harijans. It is really to be regretted that while still clinging with one hand eagerly to their newly conquered vantage positions under British rule, they think it quite reasonable to invoke the aid of Manu Samhita and other law codes to retain the present customs intact for ever.

Any impartial reader who merely glances over the pages of Manu Samhita, for example, will find that the book is concerned almost wholly with

injunctions and prohibitions for the three *upper* castes. The Sudras and the mixed castes come in for a comparatively smaller share of rules, for their lives were more simple, with few vows to undertake, and fewer ideas of progress and of heavenly felicity, which could bring them into clash with the higher ones. These Samhitas were, therefore, to be studied and enforced among such sections of society as were in those days entitled to read (or could afford to read), *viz.*, the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, so that they might discipline *themselves* more and more and become sources of Abhayam (freedom from fear)<sup>1</sup> to all *creatures* (Sudras and low castes also, not merely ants and mosquitoes) through their direct realisation of the all-pervadingness of the Inner Self.<sup>2</sup> We should regard it as our misfortune that we are now trying to enforce these rules

1. यो दत्त्वा सर्वभूतेभ्यः प्रवर्ज्यभयं गृह्णात् ।

तस्य तेजोमया लोका भवन्ति ब्रह्मवादिनः ॥

Those Brahmins who, giving protection and freedom from fear to all creatures, leave their homes and take to asceticism attain the effulgent regions. (Manu, Ch. VI, 30)

2. उच्चवचेषु भूतेषु दुर्ज्ञेयामकृतात्मभिः ।

ध्यानयोगेन संपश्येद्भूतिमस्यान्तरात्मनः ॥

The all-pervadingness of this Inner Self, which runs through all creatures, whether high or low, is not perceivable by untrained and uncultured intellects, let him (the Brahmin) witness this all-pervadingness by means of communionistic contemplation (Dhyana Yoga) (Ch. VI, 73.)

ध्यानिकं सर्वमेवैतत् यदेतदभिशब्दितम् ।

नह्यनध्यात्मवित् कश्चित् क्रियाफलमुपार्जते ॥

All these above-mentioned (latent possibilities, *viz.*, knowledge of identity with the Supreme, extinction of mineness, etc.) become patent only through meditation. He who has not acquired the knowledge of this identity will not attain the benefit (emancipation) of his works (Karma Yoga, Meditation, etc.) (Ch. VI, 82.)

against those who were debarred from reading them, whereas they for whose earthly lordship and heavenly enjoyments these codes were drawn up, have been, owing to changed conditions of life and also owing to the innate weakness of human nature, unable to observe them properly even in their essential aspects.

Every twice-born man, according to Manu, had to spend the first quarter of his life in the *house* of his preceptor, the second as a householder<sup>3</sup> and the third and fourth IN THE FOREST<sup>4</sup> as a Vanaprasthin and ripen into a Yati (Sannyasin) blessed with the vision of the One in the Many. The time for departure has been described further in Chapter VI, verse 2, where we read, "A householder, when he will find his hairs turned gray and the skin of his body furrowed with lines and wrinkles, and see the son of his own son, shall resort to the forest."<sup>5</sup> Let us honestly examine whether these compulsory disciplines are observed in letter or in spirit. We should not conclude that these are simple *random remarks* of Manu, like the one telling that the Vedas should not be read in the hearing of a Sudra: (नाविस्पृष्टमधीयीत) न शूद्रजनसन्निधौ (IV-99)—remarks which occur as one of a hundred other stipulations such as:

3. चतुर्थमायुषो भागमुषित्वाद्यं गुरौ द्विजः ।

द्वितीयमायुषो भागं कृतदारो गृहे वसेत् ॥

A twice-born one shall reside for the first quarter of his life in the house of his preceptor and the second quarter in his own house as a married man. (IV-1.)

4. एवं गृहाश्रमे स्थित्वा विधिवत्सनात्को द्विजः ।

वने वसेत्तु नियतो यथावद्विजितेन्द्रियः ॥

Having thus duly discharged the duties of a householder a *Snataka* Brahmin, with all the passions of his heart sobered and calmed, shall live in the forest, self-controlled. (VI-1.)

5. गृहस्थस्तु यदा पश्येद्वलीपलितमात्मनः ।

अपत्यस्यैव चापत्यं तदाऽऽरण्यं समाश्रयेत् ॥

One should not read Scripture when there is terror from an earthquake or indigestion or bleeding from a wound: निघटति भूमिचलने ज्योतिषाञ्चोपसर्जने (IV-105) नभुक्तमात्रे, नोऽजीर्णे, नवमित्वा नशुक्ते (IV-121). रुधिरं च स्फुटे गालाच्छस्त्रेण च परिच्छते (IV-122).

These are, on the contrary, rules coming in a continuous series from which there is no escape possible without violent twistings and interpretations. If we are to apply the entire code impartially, no person who has spent his younger days in English schools, instead of living in the *house* of his casto-man preceptor and studying the Vedas in the order of Mantra Brahmana, etc., without the least deviation from his vows (of continence, etc.)<sup>6</sup> has a right to accuse the low born man and debar him. The accuser himself ought then, in all equity, to be first debarred! Says Manu, "A Brahmin who, not having studied the Vedas, tries to acquire other forms of secular learning, is degraded to the status of a Sudra with all his progeny in this life-time."<sup>7</sup> In spite of such express statements, it is surprising that some religious leaders—products of English school study, and therefore, guilty of having neglected the Vedas at the proper time—have gone to the extent of imploring the Viceroy and higher Powers to interfere and prop up their Sanatana Dharma, in the sense of preventing the entry of the Harijans into temples; whereas their action would have had the grace and force of consistency if they had also pointed out all the serious infringements committed by the orthodox themselves and asked for Government intervention, if at all, for thrusting the delinquents

6. यथाक्रमं अविप्लुतब्रह्मचर्यः (III-2)

7. योऽनधीत्य द्विजो वेदं अन्यत्र कुरुते श्रमम् ।

स जीवन्नेव शूद्रत्वमाशु गच्छति साऽन्यः ॥  
(II-168),

officially and ceremoniously into lower levels.

We have pointed out with what ease and spontaneity the orthodox Brahmins, etc., availed themselves fully of all modern conveniences for pushing forward their material gains. If from daily reports they can see how Shares stand in the Bombay market and act upon the information, should they not, in the interest of their own heavenly gains, learn the grim lesson of the statistics that reveals the average length of an Indian's life to be much below forty years, and accordingly take to the forest dweller's life at THIRTY? It is certainly not redounding to the credit of the Sanatana Dharma that many of the so-called orthodox have found it convenient to act upon this average only in respect of marriage, i.e., managed to get themselves and their children married somewhere near ten years of age! Should we not, on the basis of these very codes of law, regard it as a gross inconsistency if a Brahmin remains clinging to Government Service after forty itself, nay retiring on a pension after fifty-five, and still getting stuck up in the householder's stage, pointing the finger of the law against the Harijans? Let alone pension and service of a non-Kshatriya king, even a simple gift from him has been vehemently condemned. Opening Chapter IV, we see verses 84 to 87 telling that "a non-Kshatriya king is ten times as vile as one who enjoys the proceeds of a brothel," that he is "like a butcher who keeps ten thousand butcher houses going, and that accepting a gift from him is a deadly sin leading to the terrible tortures of twenty-one hells in succession."<sup>8</sup> If therefore the higher Powers are to be requisitioned at all,

should it not be also to drive into the forest all those who linger in the household life beyond the prescribed period, and compel them to wind up their lives observing the holy Unchha and other vows?

Even in the householder's life, what an amount of austerity was expected! We are told that the householder should live by Ritam and Amritam, i.e., by picking up grains of paddy or collecting ears of corn from the fields (Unchha); and by what is obtained without solicitation.<sup>9</sup> Or he is to be a Kusula Dhanyaka or Kumbhi Dhanyaka,<sup>10</sup> (i.e., keep sufficient for three years or for one year only) "or store up enough to support the family for three days, or just for the morrow." Let a Brahmin under no circumstances take to the sale of articles of all kinds, milk-sale for example causing him to become a Sudra in three days!<sup>11</sup> The inner meaning of these rules is not hard to find out. Says Manu himself, "Of the four kinds of Brahmin householders (Kusula Dhanyaka, etc.) each succeeding one is more meritorious than the one immediately preceding it in the list, inasmuch as on account of the comparatively greater poverty of their resources they are compelled to practise self-abnegation (self-control) by which

8. दशवेश (वेद्या) समो वृषः ।

न राज्ञः प्रतिगृह्णीयादराजन्यप्रवृत्तिः ॥

दशसूनासहस्राणि यो वाहयति सैनिकः ।

तेन तुल्यः स्मृतो राजा, घोरस्तस्य प्रतिग्रहः ॥

यो राज्ञः प्रतिगृह्णाति तुल्यस्योच्छास्ववर्तिनः ।

स पर्यायेण यातीमान्नरकानेकविंशतिम् ॥

9. ऋताऽमृताभ्यां जीवेत् (IV-4).

ऋतमुच्छशिलं ज्ञेयममृतं स्यादयचित्म्

(IV-5).

10. कुशूलधान्यको वा स्यात् कुम्भीधान्यक एव वा ।

व्यहैहिको वापि भवेदश्वस्तनिक एव वा ॥

(IV-7).

11. व्यह्रेण शूद्रो भवति ब्राह्मणः क्षीरविक्रयात्

(X-92).

they are enabled to conquer the whole world." <sup>12</sup>

After having gone into the forest, the Brahmin is to lead a harder life by degrees. He is, for example, to live "on flowers, fruits and edible roots, whether grown on land or in water, and the fruit of holy forest trees as well as oils pressed out of wild seeds". He is to be clad in skin, rags, or barks of trees, bathe morning and evening each day, wear beard, grow nails, etc. As time passes, he is not to eat anything grown on a ploughed field even if it be voluntarily offered; even under the most pressing circumstances he must not eat any bulb or fruit grown in a village. In summer, besides, he is to have the fivefold penance (*i. e.*, stand in the midst of four blazing fires, one on each side, and the scorching sun overhead), lie in the open during the rainy season and wear wet clothes in the forepart of winter, thus gradually increasing his penitential austerities. <sup>13</sup>

All these point only to one goal: To the cowardly-minded, a steadily nar-

rowing circle of satisfaction of the senses with the dreaded deity, Death, awaiting grimly at the farther end; or to the heroic, an ideal opportunity for getting out of their old ruts of self-aggrandising economics, for further meditations on the spiritual truths which they had always been recalling to mind during their daily Parayanams (studies), and if fortune so permits, for the much coveted consummation of the direct experience of the Ultimate reality. The elaborate injunctions laid down by the law-givers show that they were meant to be actually *practised*, not merely read and skipped over with the idea of compensating one's negligence by a thorough and severe penalising of the lower orders. If this wholesome device of retreating to the forest had been systematically resorted to, a double benefit would have come: The older people would have been forced from the beginning to avoid all laxity and sense of security arising from their property, bank accounts and relations, and also to acquire GENUINE FAITH in the Almighty Protector by voluntarily undergoing the sufferings of the homeless and moneyless. Secondly, when for the expansion of their own hearts the older members of society had cleared out, the younger generation would have been left unhampered to draw up codes of law suited to their times, *i. e.*, laws providing equal opportunities to one and all,—not necessarily equal privileges without consideration to the efforts put forth by each—laws whose observance would have brought out such eminent virtues as originality, self-sacrifice and heroism lying latent in every individual, so that society and general culture as a whole would have been strengthened and immensely benefited. Social reform would then have come in easy and imperceptible

12. चतुर्णामपि चैतेषां द्विजानां गृहमेधिनाम् ।  
ज्यायान् परःपरो ज्ञेयो धर्मतो लोकजित्तमः॥  
(IV-8).

(धर्मतः = सञ्चयलाघवधर्मेण; धर्मबलेन स्व-  
र्गादि लोकान् विजयते इति भावः)

13. स्थलजौदकशाकानि पुष्पमूलफलानि च ।  
मेध्यवृक्षोद्भवान्यद्यात् ज्ञेहांश्च फलसंभवान्  
(VI-13).  
जटाश्च बिभृशान्नित्यं श्मश्रुलोमनखानि च ॥  
वसीत चर्मचीरं वा सायं स्नायात् पूरे तथा ।  
(VI-6)

न फालकृष्टमशनीयादुत्सृष्टमपि केनचित् ।  
न ग्रामजातान्यार्तोऽपि मूलानि च फलानि  
च ॥  
(VI-16)

ग्रीष्मे पञ्चतपास्तु स्याद्वर्षास्वभ्रावकाशिकः  
आर्द्रवासास्तु हेमन्ते क्रमशो वद्धेयस्तपः ॥  
(VI-28).

instalments and people would never have failed to respond healthily to the changing times. But now the safety valves of forest-life and other devices being closed and no effective substitutes found out or enforced by any one, our ideas have become stagnant, distorted and mean, so that any honest attempt to rectify them looks like a revolution, and minds that have lost all sense of proportion raise the cry that their Sanatana Dharma is in danger of extinction! It is disgraceful if we have to wait for a compulsory exile into the Vanaprastha's life—with no permission to return therefrom—in order to save real Sanatana Dharma and alter the present situation where one section is tyrannising over millions of its co-religionists!

Sufficient has been shown to reveal the gross injustice of raking up Manu Smṛiti and other ancient codes to stop the entry of Harijans into temples, etc. A code, if it is to be enforced, should apply to all equally, and on no account should be allowed to connive at the infringements of the knowing ones for whom they are expressly made. We wish that in the forthcoming discussions this principle would be remembered and persons whose lives have not been moulded strictly in accordance with the Smṛitis summarily debarred from speaking against the Harijans, using these old books for their support.

With all the old-world odour about Manu and his code, it must be admitted that he had a grand conception of the ideal Brahmin, an ideal that all people without distinction of birth might profitably try to assimilate. A virtuous Brahmin was a real hero, and would not complain to the king of any wrong inflicted by another, for he had the confidence that he could, if he so wanted, punish the wrong doer by his own psychic power.<sup>14</sup> How could he resent other people's oppression when his whole early training had been to shun worldly honours, like poison, and to court humiliation so that he might attain immortality? Persecuted or oppressed, he was not to hurt the feelings of others. He was not to wish or to do any injury to anybody, or even

to use a harsh word, for that might bar the gate of heaven to him in the other world.<sup>15</sup> How could he be a coward or a dreamer when during times of distress it was ordained that he should earn his livelihood by doing the duties of a Kshatriya, such a vocation being *more kindred* to his own than any other calling?<sup>16</sup> It was commonly believed, and evidently experienced too, in those days, that missiles acquired extraordinary destructive properties if discharged with proper Mantras; and the fact that Brahmins were adepts in the use of Mantras of all kinds explains the ease with which a Parasurama could successfully slaughter generations of professional Kshatriyas or a Drona could train up such skilful fighters as Arjuna and the other Kaurava princes. It was not the Brahmin's incapacity that stood in the way of his taking up the Kshatriya's or Vaisya's occupation, it was simply the desire not to compete with them unduly<sup>17</sup> while he had the superior gift of teaching and the privilege of accepting gifts on various occasions. Far from competing, he was to be a sort of bulwark against unemployment, for "considering the skilfulness of their services, their capacity for work and the number of their dependants, the Brahmin was to adequately fix the salaries of his Sudra servants."<sup>18</sup> Nor was the Sudra considered

14. न ब्राह्मणो वेदयेत किञ्चिद्राजनि धर्मेविद् ।

स्ववीर्येणैव तान् शिष्यान्मानवानपकारिणः ॥

(XI-31).

सम्मानाद्ब्राह्मणो नित्यमुद्विजेत विषादिव

अमृतस्येव चाकाङ्क्षेद्वमानस्य सर्वदा ॥

(II-162).

15. नारुन्नुदः स्यादार्तोऽपि न परद्रोहकर्मधीः ।

ययास्योद्विजेत वाचा नालोक्यातामुदीरयेत् ॥

(II-162).

16. अजीवंस्तु ययोक्तेन ब्राह्मणः स्वेन कर्मणा ।

जीवेत् चत्रियधर्मेण सद्यस्य प्रत्यनन्तरः ॥

(X-31).

17. वैश्ये चेच्छति नान्येन रक्षितव्याः कथंचन ॥

Let Vaisya alone rear cattle. (IX-328).

18. प्रकल्था तस्य तैर्वृत्तिः स्वकुटुम्बाद् यथाहर्तः ।

शक्तिञ्चावेक्ष्य दाक्ष्यन्न भृत्यानाञ्च परिगृह्ण ॥

(X-124).

mean ; for " among Sudras, a Brahmin could partake of the cooked rice of one who cultivates his fields, or of one who is an ancient friend of the family, or of one who keeps his cows, or of his slave or his barber, as well as of him who has surrendered himself to his protection."<sup>19</sup> And if Vaisyas and Sudras went to the Brahmin's house as *Atithis* (guests), he was to feed them in the company of his own servants, the master and mistress of the house even ordinarily eating only *after* the Brahmin guests, relations and servants.<sup>20</sup> Was he not a man who could withstand any amount of shocks from impure quarters? By means of his Japas or Homas, penitential austerities and renunciation he could remove all sin incurred by taking gifts indiscriminately from one and all.<sup>21</sup> By the proper observance of his vows he had stored up so much blazing energy that he was above all defilement, like the holy Ganges or Fire. Can a holy thing ever be called defiled by an unclean substance? <sup>22</sup> Mantras besides, are capable of achieving wonders. Does not the priest in the modern temple—which is closed against the Harijans on the ground of the *deity's* image being polluted by their approach—ward off all possible subtle evil influences by daily showing certain Mudras and repeating Mantras of the type : ' Let all demons dwelling in the earth and creating

impediments run away or be destroyed by the Lord's (or even my) commands' ?<sup>23</sup> And if we maintain that temple worship is not all a *sham*, how can we conclude that the impurity caused by the entry of the Harijans, who are at least human beings, cannot be removed, while any *ordinary* priest's Mantras are considered strong enough to counteract the presence of malignant demons? Lastly, may not one honestly entertain misgivings about the infallibility of the criterion of birth alone for determining people's caste? For Manu himself has definitely told that even in a noble family it is possible to detect the son of a faithless mother by an inference from his vile behaviour, which he must have inherited from his real progenitor.<sup>24</sup> Add to this also the express statement that "A Sudra may obtain the caste of a Brahmin, and a Brahmin may obtain the caste of a Sudra ; the sons of Kshatriya or Vaisya fathers too may acquire higher or lower castes."<sup>25</sup> It is thus clear that the view obtained by a careful study of Manu is at complete variance in many an essential point from that which the so-called orthodox wish to uphold, and enforce, to the detriment of the Harijans alone.

To conclude, let us trust our ancestors did not become spiritual giants and generate powerful currents of thought in vain. May we, their descendants, therefore, develop more and more daring, resourcefulness and broad-mindedness coupled with an unshakable faith in our own *purity*, so that the present as well as future crises may be smoothly tided over, and posterity may find that the *spirit* of the *Sanatana Dharma* has in no way suffered at our hands through unwarranted exclusion and age-long tyranny.

19. आद्विकः कुलमित्रश्च गोपालो दासनापितौ ।

एते शूद्रेषु भाज्यान्ना यश्चात्मानं निवेदयेत् ॥

(IV-253)

20. वैश्यश्चापि प्राप्तौ कुटुम्बेऽतिथिधर्मिणौ ।

भोजयेत् सह श्रुत्यैस्त्वावावृणंसं प्रयोजयन् ॥

(III-112).

भुक्तवत्स्वयं विप्रेषु स्वेषु श्रुतेषु चैव हि ।

भुञ्जीयातां ततः पश्चादवशिष्टन्तु दम्पती ॥

(II-1:6).

21. जपहोमैरपत्येनो याजनाध्यापनः कृतम् ।

पूतिग्रहनिमित्तन्तु त्यागेन तपसैव हि ॥

(X-111).

22. पवित्रं दुष्यतीत्यतदे धर्मतो नोपपद्यते ॥

(X-102).

विप्राः (ज्वलनाम्बुसमा हि ते ॥ (X-118).

23. अपसर्पन्तु ते भूताः ये भूताः भुविसंस्थिताः

24. कुले मुख्येऽपि जातस्य यस्य स्याद्योनिसङ्करः ।

स श्रयत्येव तच्छीलं नरोऽल्पमपि वा बहु ॥

(X-60).

25. शूद्रो ब्राह्मणतामेति ब्राह्मणश्चेति शूद्रताम् ।

क्षत्रियाजातमेवन्तु विद्यद्विश्वात् तथैव च ॥

(X-65).

## OBITUARY NOTE

### *The Passing Away of Swami Subodhananda*

**W**ITH a deep sense of sorrow and loss we announce to our readers that Swami Subodhananda (popularly known as Khoka Maharaj) entered into Maha Samadhi in the Library Building of the Belur Math at 3.5 P.M. on Friday the 2nd December, 1932. The Swami was sixty-six years of age. Though he was bed-ridden due to consumption for over a year, his face never betrayed any worry or loss of joy and serenity to the very last.

Subodh Chandra Ghose (the family name of the Swami) was the son of Krishnadas Ghose and the descendant of Sankar Ghose, the founder of the Kali and Siddheswari temples at Tantanania. He was born on the 8th November, 1867. From his boyhood Subodh showed signs of innate spiritual nature. His parents took great care in fostering his spiritual tendencies. The mother, especially, used to spend hours telling him stories from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and in instilling moral teachings into him for the proper moulding of his character.

Subodh read up to the Second Form in the Hare School. When proposals for his marriage began to come from different rich families, and his father appeared eager to make a decision, the boy became nervous, and one day told his father plainly that he would never marry and fall into the meshes of Maya.

Subodh was drawn to Sri Ramakrishna as a result of reading a small booklet containing the teachings of the Master (published by Mr. Suresh Chandra Datta). He told his father about his great desire to see the Saint of Dakshineswar and was told in reply to wait patiently till the next Sunday. Subodh's eagerness, however, was so keen that he could not brook even that small delay. He therefore conspired with one of his neighbours to go to Dakshineswar earlier, and accordingly

after a day or two Subodh accompanied by his friend went on foot to the temple of Rani Rashmani to see the Master.

As they entered his room Sri Ramakrishna at once recognised Subodh as one of his future "inner group" disciples, and asked him if he belonged to the family of Sankar Ghose. The question and the endearing way in which it was put took Subodh by surprise and drew his heart powerfully towards Sri Ramakrishna. He asked Subodh to come near but as he was hesitating, the Master dragged him to his bed, and grasping his hand remained with closed eyes for some time. After that he said, "Mother says you will attain the goal." Sri Ramakrishna then entertained him with light refreshment and insisted on his coming to Dakshineswar on Saturday or Tuesday. Subodh was wavering at the beginning but at the repeated urge of the Master he had to agree. He then took leave of Sri Ramakrishna and returned home.

The memory of this meeting haunted Subodh and his eagerness to see the Master a second time grew keener. On the next Saturday he therefore re-visited the temple of Rani Rashmani. That day the room was full of devotees and while he was hesitating to enter inside, Sri Ramakrishna saw him and beckoned him to stay outside. Taking leave of the audience the Master soon went out and squatting on the staircase of the Shiva temple near his room, fell into an ecstasy. Then he asked Rakhal (afterwards Swami Brahmananda) to fetch some Ganges water. Rakhal carried out the order in no time, and after washing his hand with the water Sri Ramakrishna wrote something on the tongue of Subodh. He also touched Subodh's body from the navel upwards repeating thrice, "Awake, Mother, awake!" Subodh felt that a current was rushing upwards through the spinal cord and a divine light flashed in his vision in which he saw gods and

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goddesses merging in the Infinite. On coming to the world of the senses he found the Master passing his hand in the reverse order, i. e., from the head downwards. After this initiation Subodh used to see often a light between his eyebrows. He soon became indifferent to his study and began frequenting Dakshineswar. The love of the Master attracted the boy more and more and he became one of the chosen disciples of Sri Ramakrishna.

On the Master's passing away in the year 1886, the band of disciples including Swami Subodhananda led the life of renunciation and austerity at the monastery of Baranagore under the leadership of Swami Vivekananda. After the triumphant preaching of Vedanta at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago and other places in America and Europe Swamiji returned to India and made an earnest appeal to his brother disciples to come out of their seclusion and help him in the work of spreading the message of the Master for the good of humanity at large. At that time many of his Gurubhais (brother disciples) who were busily engaged in practising severe austerities in holy places and the Himalayan retreats readily rendered their service for the noble cause. Swami Subodhananda also responded to the leader's call, like the rest. Since then he, as the ardent and devoted servant of the Order, was working as one of the eleven Trustees

of the Belur Math appointed by Swamiji in 1901. Of late he became the treasurer and he worked in that capacity till his last days. During his long serviceful life he travelled in many places of East Bengal and the neighbouring provinces carrying the message of the Master from door to door. He brought consolation and peace to many a weary soul who looked up to him for guidance.

He first suffered for some time from diabetes. About three years back he had an attack of acute blood dysentery, when his life was almost despaired of and the attendants were waiting in drooping spirits he had a vision of the Master who told him that his life would be prolonged. The vision proved true and he recovered his former health within a short time. But after a year he fell a victim to consumption which gradually wasted away his body and brought about this fatal end.

Those who had the privilege to come in intimate touch with his personality can never forget the divine influence that radiated from him. His transparent simplicity, his humility, his absolute trust in and resignation to the will of his Guru, his readiness to serve all who came to seek his guidance under any condition, his love and concern for their welfare—all these will ever be engraved in the hearts of his disciples and numerous devotees.

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## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Tithi-Puja in connection with the 71st Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda and the 98th Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna will be performed this year respectively on Wednesday the 18th January, 1933 and Sunday the 26th February, 1933.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XIX]

FEBRUARY, 1933

[No. 10

## HINDU ETHICS

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अङ्गिर्गात्राणि शुद्ध्यन्ति मनः सत्येन शुद्ध्यति ।

विद्यातपोभ्यां भूतात्मा बुद्धिज्ञानेन शुद्ध्यति ॥

धृतिः क्षमा दमोऽस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ।

धी विद्या सत्यमक्रोधो दशकं धर्मलक्षणम् ॥

अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ।

एतं सामासिकं धर्मं चातुर्वर्ण्येऽब्रवीन्मनुः ॥

Bodies are cleansed by water, mind is purified by truthfulness, the individual soul is purified by sacred learning and austerity and the intellect is purified by knowledge.

Fortitude, forgiveness, self-control, abstention from unlawful gain, purity, subduing of the senses, scriptural learning, knowledge of the Supreme Being, truthfulness and freedom from anger—these constitute the tenfold Dharma for all.

Non-injury, truthfulness, abstention from unlawful gain, purity, sense-control—this in brief is the Dharma declared by Manu for all the members of the four castes.

MANUSAMHITA

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

*(Continued from page 324)*

### *Nature of Nirvikalpa Samadhi and the Master's Desire to Remain Absorbed in It*

**S**HRIMAT Totapuri left Dakshin-  
neswar after a stay of eleven  
months. At that time the Master  
made a firm determination not to  
remain any longer in the domain  
of 'I' and 'Mine'; but to be absorbed  
in the unbroken consciousness  
of oneness with God, i. e., the  
highest state of Advaitic realisation.  
And when the attempt was made,  
the result was really wonderful.  
For the Master quickly transcended  
all sense of bodily existence—even  
the thoughts of eating, sleeping,  
cleansing etc., would not occur to  
his mind. What to speak then of  
exchanging words with others! In  
that mood neither the conscious-  
ness of 'I' and 'Mine' nor that of  
'You' and 'Yours' exists. It is  
devoid of the perception either of  
'two' or of 'one'. For, indeed,  
how can there be the perception of  
oneness if there does not arise the  
idea of the existence of two? In  
that state the mind is perfectly  
tranquil, all modifications having  
been brought under complete con-  
trol. Only, "in the heart (of the  
wise one) there then arises the  
perception of that 'Something'

which is eternal knowledge, pure  
bliss, incomparable, eternally free,  
actionless, as limitless as space,  
stainless, without distinction of  
subject and object, nay is beyond  
all Prakriti and its modifications,  
being the all-pervading Brahman  
in essence" (Vivekachudamani).  
It is all bliss beyond time and  
space, bliss without name or form  
or any object for support. Only  
the incorporeal Self, being in its  
indescribable blissful state, remains  
then in a sort of transcendental  
consciousness which is beyond all  
phases of mental or intellectual  
perceptions. At that time the  
Master had a continuous experi-  
ence of that inexpressible mood  
which the scriptures speak of as  
"the self delighting in the Self."

### *The Wonderful Mental Constitution of the Master*

The Master used to say that no  
worldly object or relation did stand  
in the way of his experiencing the  
Vedantic Nirvikalpa state. For, in  
his great yearning to attain the  
blessed feet of the Mother of the  
Universe he had successfully rooted  
out all desires for secular enjoy-  
ments. Indeed through his love for  
the Mother he had got control over  
such desires, by exclaiming thus:

"O Mother, do Thou take back Thy knowledge and Thy ignorance, Thy Dharma and Thy Adharma, Thy virtue and Thy vice, Thy honour as well as Thy dishonour, but endow me with genuine love and devotion towards Thy glorious feet! Do thou also vouchsafe unto me Thy blessed vision!" Is it ever possible for us to have even a glimpse of such one-pointed love and devotion? We may of course very often say with our lips, "O Lord, do Thou accept all that I have." But immediately afterwards, in the course of performing any action, we give up the idea of the Lord, consider everything to be ours and begin to speculate upon probable gains or losses. We also run hither and thither worrying our minds with the thoughts of other people's opinion about us. Often in contemplating upon our future we feel as if we are drifting helplessly in the midst of a vast and shoreless ocean. At other times, on the contrary, our minds are lifted up in joy, and we feel within us a firm conviction that through our efforts we can bring about a revolution in the world — although not fully, at least to a great extent. The Master, however, had no such deceptive mind as we have. No sooner had he uttered, "O Mother, do Thou take back Thy own things" than his mind dropped readily all further hankerings for them. After that, at no subsequent time would any idea cross his mind, such as, "It has been already uttered. Now what is to be done? Would I had

never told so." Thus, whenever the Master made up his mind to offer anything to the Mother of the Universe, we invariably found that he could never again claim that thing as his own.

#### *The Master's Devotion to Truth*

We wish to add something more about this attitude of the Master. It was impossible for him to utter such expressions as, "Mother, *here is Thy Truth and here is Thy falsehood*—take them back," although he could dedicate to Her, Dharma and Adharma, virtue and vice, good and evil, honour and dishonour and all that pertains to the body and the mind. The reason was cited by the Master himself thus, "If the Truth be forsaken in this manner, how can I maintain the truth that I have offered everything to the Mother of the Universe?" And indeed, what steadfast devotion to truth he had, although he had given up *all*! Whenever, for example, he would decide to go anywhere on a particular day, that very same day he was sure to be present there just at the right time. He could not also accept anything from persons other than those to whom he had previously expressed his desire for such acceptance. Whenever, too, he would determine no longer to eat a particular thing or to do a particular work, he could not afterwards eat that thing or do that work. The Master used to say, "He who has got devotion to truth verily attains to the God of Truth. The Mother never allows the words of such a man to turn out to be false."

Indeed, countless were the instances we were able to observe in the Master's life proving the truth of this statement; and it will not be out of place to cite a few of them here.

#### *First Instance*

One day, at Dakshineswar, Gopal's mother, who possessed a supremely devotional temperament, had cooked food for the Master. Everything was ready and the Master sat down for his meal, but he found that the rice was a bit hard and not well boiled. At this he got irritated and said, "How can I eat this rice? I shall never again take cooked rice from her." All thought that these words were merely a threat to Gopal's mother, meant to make her careful in future. How could it be possible for him not to take the food prepared by Gopal's mother with whom he would behave so affectionately? Moreover, they all thought that he would surely forgive her and that the matter would then have an end. But circumstances took an opposite turn. Shortly after the incident the Master got throat trouble which gradually increased and made it necessary for him to stop taking

rice. Thus there was afterwards no further occasion for him to take cooked rice from Gopal's mother!

#### *Second Instance*

One day the Master said in an ecstatic mood, "Henceforth I shall not take anything other than Payasam (rice boiled in milk and sweetened)." The Holy Mother at that time came there with the food for the Master. When she heard those words, she grew anxious as she knew full well that whatever words dropped from the Master's lips would never prove false. She said to him, "I shall cook for you fish soup and rice. You may take that. Why should you subsist on Payasam alone?" But being still in the same mood the Master repeated, "No, I shall take only the preparation of rice with milk and sugar." Shortly after this he was attacked with throat disease and it became impossible for him to take vegetables or any of the usual preparations. He had thenceforth to live solely upon rice or barley mixed with milk and sugar (in strict accordance with what he had himself uttered while in that ecstatic mood).

## IF HINDUISM IS TO BE SAVED

**H**INDUS often speak of the glorious past of their country and the spiritual culture they have inherited from the ancients. But our conduct often seems to show that these professions are meant more as conventional expressions suited for public orations and newspaper articles than as genuine indications of our love and regard for our cultural heritage. For if one's love of an institution is to be measured by one's active interest in strengthening and perpetuating it, it is doubtful whether some sections of Hindus who show themselves off as the most ardent champions of Hindu culture are really sincere in their professions. To say in one breath that the Hindu culture is great and glorious, and in the next to vehemently oppose the work of those who strive for its preservation, is a tactic whose inconsistency seems to be hidden only from the eye of one section of orthodox Hindus. No move should be made, they say, that would interfere in the least with the established social customs and practices of the land—customs and practices that have their sanction in the Vedas, Puranas, Smritis, Itihasas, Nibandhas and what not; for that would be the surest way to the destruction of Hindu culture, and their devoted hearts could not even bear the thought of it. But it is strange that these champions of Hindu Dharma, so vigilant that even the most minor innovation cannot escape their notice, should be entirely unaware of the hostile forces that are making breach after breach in the structure of their society,—whose efforts, unless immediately checked, are sure to have very disastrous effects on Hinduism in the long run.

Such are the thoughts that come to one's mind when one thinks of the agitation that is being carried on in the country by some Hindus who style themselves as orthodox against the efforts of Mahatma Gandhi for the abolition of untouchability and the admission of the Harijans (the erstwhile depressed classes) into the Hindu temples. They are busy quoting Sastras and invoking age-long practices in order to show that these necessary reforms are subversive of Hindu Dharma. One is led to wonder which of these is more remarkable—their narrowness of heart or their shortness of vision. Perhaps if they had known that these Harijans, whom they refuse to admit into temples, can easily find welcome in Mahomedan mosques and Christian Churches, and that a general movement of these classes towards Islam and Christianity is sure to have very serious consequences on Hindu religion and culture, they would have been less vociferous and stubborn in opposing this consolidating move. Recently some prominent leaders of this section sent messages of sympathy and encouragement to the Zamorin asking him not to yield to the claims of Harijans to enter the temple of Guruvayur. If they had fully realised the consequences of the policy they advocate, we doubt whether they would have issued such messages. Kashmir is a land well-known to the Orthodox Hindu—a land that was once a seat of Hindu learning and culture where even Adi Sankara, the great Guru and Acharya had to go in order to establish his doctrine finally and to justify his claim to be the master of all learning. But today if

following the footsteps of this great Guru, these champions of orthodoxy were to go out for an All-India Dig-Vijaya, Kashmir is perhaps the last place that they will have to visit. For about ninety per cent of its population has now become Muslim, and no Council of Pandits awaits them there to contest their claim to sit on the seat reserved for the master of all knowledge (Sarvajna pitham). As recent events have shown, Hindu culture has little chance of survival in that land with its microscopic minority of Hindu population. The fate of Kashmir will perhaps be the fate of the rest of India too in the future, if the policy advocated by the orthodox champions of Varnashrama Dharma were to be followed strictly for a few generations more. Hinduism will then certainly remain pure and undefiled, in printed books, for there will be few Hindus left to defile it and hostile forces will usurp the very seats of these defendants.

In short, the alternatives that confront the Hindus today are these: Do they want that India should remain predominantly Hindu in religion and culture, or do they like to see their race, culture and religion extinct in this land? If they prefer the latter alternative, the best way for it is being shown by the opponents of anti-untouchability movement; but if they are for the survival of their culture and religion, it is high time for them to take a decisive step for absorbing the Harijans into their fold. And what can be a more definite move in this direction than the opening of the Hindu temples for them? Due to the disunion among the Hindus and the narrowness of the privileged classes, large numbers of the lower strata of society have been leaving the Hindu fold and becoming Christians and Mahomedans in the expectation of im-

proved social status. As a result the census figures of India for the past several decades have been showing a marked decline in the number of Hindus and a corresponding increase in that of other religionists. It can be safely predicted that if this movement were to go on unchecked for another fifty years, the four crores of untouchable Hindus and the equally large number of hill tribes will be wholly absorbed by Islam and Christianity and Hinduism and Hindu culture will consequently cease to have popular support in the land of their birth. Pandits argue that temples exist because of the Sastras and that these Sastras prohibit the entry of certain classes of Hindus into them. But they little realise that there are temples and Sastras in India because there are still Hindus inhabiting this country, and that if they become extinct by the constant secession of its oppressed and discontented sections, a time will soon come when both the Sastras and the temples will automatically disappear from this country. For every secession means not merely a supporter less but invariably an adversary more. The situation is one which demands more of common sense and practical wisdom than of vain Sastrie knowledge and inherited prejudices. The question that faces us today is this: are we going to make some very necessary adjustments in our social system or are we going to bring about the disruption of our society and our Dharma both of which we seem to cherish so much? The time has come when a clear and decisive answer can no longer be delayed.

The seriousness of the situation will be understood only when one studies the statistics relating to the growth of the different religious communities in this country for the last fifty years.

When the British Government established itself in this land the Hindus formed 80 per cent of India's population. In 1872 their proportion came down to 73·07 per cent and the latest census figures show that it has further come down to 68·2 per cent. In other words the proportionate strength of the Hindus to the other religionists has decreased by nearly 15 per cent. During 1871—81 the Hindus increased by 27·6 per cent, the Muslims by 24 per cent, the Christians by 107 per cent. During 1881—91 the Hindus increased by 10·5 per cent, the Muslims by 14·4 per cent and the Christians by 27·9 per cent. During 1901—11 the Hindus increased by 5 per cent, the Muslims by 6·6 per cent and the Christians by 22·6 per cent. And to crown this decidedly bad record for the Hindus, the census figures for 1911—21 show a decrease of 4 per cent in their numbers as against an increase of 5·1 per cent among Muslims and 22·6 per cent among Christians. It is significant to note that taking the whole period extending from 1881 to 1921, while the Hindus increased from 17·8 million to 21·7 million, the Muslims rose from 5·1 million to 6·9 million and the Christians from 2 million to 4·8 million. Nothing is so remarkable in these figures as the phenomenal rise in the number of Christians. Whereas they formed 7 per cent of India's population in 1871, they were nearly 15 per cent by 1921, or in other words they had increased by 114 per cent. And the most recent census figures for 1921—31 show a further increase of 38 per cent among them. A study of the details of the census figures in different provinces will show that in some places in certain decades the Christians have increased by such high figures as 200, 400, 800 and even 1,134 per cent.

Do the orthodox Hindus, who oppose the temple-entry of Harijans and send telegrams and memorials of protest to Viceroys and Governors, spend even a moment's thought over the serious position revealed by these census figures? Have they adopted any measure to check this great movement of population away from the fold of Hinduism? Every one knows what a clean record they have to their credit in this matter.

It is quite clear that the phenomenal increase in the number of Christians and the comparatively smaller increase in that of the Muslims are wholly due to the conversion of the lower strata of Hindu society, especially of the depressed classes and the animists inhabiting the hilly regions. The propagandists of these two aggressive religions, especially of Christianity, have spread all over the country and are appealing chiefly to these submerged classes whom the pollution-fearing Hindus have kept at a safe distance for the past several centuries without consciously doing anything to improve their cultural condition. We shall give a brief account below of the activities, organisation and resources of the various agencies working in this country for the conversion of the Hindus. For it will further show how Hinduism will have to meet with much greater loss than it ever incurred in the past, if the Hindu society fails to bring the Harijans into a closer bond of union with it without any further delay.

The Muslim propaganda in the country is done in a silent fashion compared to that of the Christians. But it is none the less effective. The Muslims are missionary by temperament and every important mosque is an efficient institution for the propagation of Islam. But besides this general machinery for propaganda,

there are several sects and societies working specially for the conversion of Hindus to Islam. Among these may be mentioned the Wahabis, the Ahle Quran, the Naturalis and the Ahmadiyas. In addition there are several Madrashes and Tablighi centres in different parts of India working for the spread of Islam. Many of the Sufi centres have also become seats of active propaganda. Kwaja Hassan Nizami, the head of one of the biggest of these centres, has an elaborate and subtle scheme for the propagation of Islam. He wants to address himself chiefly to the aboriginal tribes, the depressed classes and the Hindu widows. Some of the Muslim missionaries carry on their propaganda by playing upon the fears and superstitious beliefs of the Hindus. In the past the Khoja community of which H. H. The Aga Khan is the head, was formed of Hindu converts who were made to believe that the Aga Khan is the tenth incarnation of Vishnu. Similarly there is a movement in the Kannada country today, headed by a Muslim who professes himself to be an incarnation of Basava, the founder of the Vira Saiva sect. It is said that many Vira Saivas are becoming his followers.

If we turn to the activities of Christian missions in India, we find a more formidable force arrayed against Hindu society. The missionary work of the Christians has the support of all the pious people of the West, and the resources in men and money at the back of the movement is therefore immense. Besides the ecclesiastical establishments for the ministration of British civil and military officers, the number of Protestant Missionary Societies working in India are as follows: 7 Anglican Missionary Societies with five Sisterhoods, 2 Associations of the

Church of England, 8 Baptist Societies, 7 Presbyterian Societies, 7 Congregational Societies, 19 All-India Missions, 5 Undenominational Missions, 7 Lutheran Societies, 4 Methodist Societies, and besides all these, the ever-active Salvation Army with its splendid organisation. The important Protestant Missionary Societies have on the whole 48,937 workers in the pastoral, educational, medical and other departments of their activity. The total number of villages they administer comes to 40,166. The total number of educational institutions under them is 13,481, while their medical departments run 691 hospitals with 4,575 beds.

Apart from these Protestant Societies, the Roman Catholic Church has its own organisation and activities. It administers 34 districts with 1,482 residential stations having 2,818 priests, 22 seminaries for secular clergy accommodating 750 students, and 9 seminaries for regular clergy. There are in all 89 Orders—14 of priests, 12 of Brothers, and 63 of Sisters. There are 16 institutions for Brothers and Catechists, 43 for nuns and lady teachers, 197 orphanages, 15 colleges, 142 secondary schools and a very large number of primary schools. In addition to these two main sections of Christian institutions, there are 15 other special missions like the Bible League, Medical Missionary Association, Christian Literature Society, Temperance Union, etc.

We have given this rough account of the activities of Missionary Societies in India not because we entertain any jealousy or malice towards them—for the Missionaries are quite right in working for the uplift of those whom the Hindus neglect—but because these are facts which our Hindu brethren, especially those who are agitating

against the temple-entry movement ought to know. For it will be the best instrument to disillusion them, and to show that flourishing quotations from Smritis and Agamas is no longer capable of saving the Hindu Dharma. What with this tremendous activity of Missionary Societies and what with the general apathy and suicidal conservatism of the Hindus, is there any wonder in the 114 per cent increase of the Christians and the decline of the Hindus from 80 to 68 per cent in the total population of India? The statements of the Missionaries themselves show that these mass conversions into Christianity take place from the ranks of Hindu untouchables, and that the prime motive of these converts is the prospect of improving their social and economic conditions. The proceedings of the Church Missionary Society says: "That the Parayan should desire to escape from the social slough to which Hinduism has confined him is perfectly laudable; it is natural that he should look for, and fortunate that he should find in the Missionary, some one who has the power and the will to assist him to the accomplishment of his desire. Absolute famine very probably does give the final impetus in many cases. *Again, to become Christian undoubtedly means a rise in social scale and it is this which some of the inquirers desire rather than pardon and peace of God.*" Dr. Whitehead, lately Bishop of Madras, says: "Ninety years ago it was almost the universal opinion among the leading Missionaries in India and their supporters at Home that the important thing to do for the spread of Christianity was to educate the Brahmins and the high caste Hindus in cities and towns, so that, when they were converted, Christian truth might spread out from the cities to the villages and permeate downwards from the top

to the bottom of society. Experience has proved that Christianity is destined to spread in India in exactly the opposite way. The Christian church has been steadily and rapidly built up, not in the cities and towns, but in the remote village districts and mainly among the poor outcastes." According to the same authority, "the outcastes of Hindu society are being gathered into the fold of the Church at the rate of 2,000 a week." He expects this rate to increase much more in the future. "Today," he remarks, "it is a mass movement, to-morrow it will be an avalanche." There is nothing to falsify this prediction, unless the Hindus make a determined effort to rid the country of the curse of untouchability.

It is certain that Hinduism can not stand this drain for an indefinitely long time. The question therefore is what the no-changers among the orthodox Hindus are going to do to put a stop to this slow disintegration of their religion and society. Often we hear their valiant vocal defence of the Sastras, but what line of defence are they going to take for the protection of their society, without which neither the Sastras nor the temples have any chance of survival in the country? As yet they have not come forward with any positive plan of their own. They refuse Harijans admission into temples on the plea that their standard of cleanliness is not sufficiently high. But have they done anything to teach them cleanly habits? Shunning them as walking carrion is not certainly the way to raise them to the cultural standard required of persons who want to worship in temples. If, side by side with protesting against the right of Harijans for temple-entry, these spiritual heads and their followers had devoted at least a

part of their immense resources to the uplift of Harijans, their conscientious objections would have appeared in a more favourable light. But with no such redeeming feature to their credit their present outcry against untouchability makes them the greatest enemies of Hinduism in spite of what they may say of their devotion to the Sastras and the traditions of Hinduism.

But this necessary work of reform and uplift, which the so-called lovers of Sanatana Dharma refuse to do, has been taken up by the rest of the Hindus who rather like to see their religion survive than witness its death from the self-injected poison of untouchability. The organisation of the Untouchability League under the presidentship of Mr. Birla is one of the most healthy moves that Hindu society has made in recent times. The League seeks not only to remove "any bar in civic matters which operates to the detriment of the down-trodden sections of our people," but also "to bring about such a radical change in the very mentality of caste Hindus that they will, as a matter of course, treat the Harijans as equals." The League has its central office at Delhi while Provincial Boards are to be formed in each of the 22 provinces comprising the whole of India. For actual work the country is divided into 184 Units, each Provincial Board guiding the Units lying within its limits. Each Unit is to have two itinerant workers who are to move about the villages and do the twofold work of (a) Propaganda (*i. e.*, learning the conditions of life and the needs of the Harijans by actually moving among them, and also persuading the higher caste Hindus to give equal treatment to them), and (b) Uplift (*i. e.*, to attend to the educational needs of Harijans by arranging to send boys, and if possible

adults, to schools and providing them with books and other requirements, to improve their economic condition by starting cottage industries and co-operative societies, and to insist on public roads, wells, schools, temples etc. being thrown open to them). According to the scheme, each Unit will require the modest amount of Rs. 3,000 per year, of which at least half the amount will have to be collected locally while the other half will be contributed by the Provincial Board, if necessary. Provincial Boards are to collect funds on their own account, and if they have surplus after meeting the expenses of their office and the Units under their charge, they are to contribute the same to the Central Board of the League. Towards the expenses of the Provincial Boards which are not self-supporting or have no surplus, the Central Board will contribute according to their needs, but not exceeding 50 per cent of their expenditure. Besides relying on the Provincial Boards, the Central Board will raise money on its own account also. According to the calculation of the League the total amount required for the whole of India for the working of the scheme is 6 lakhs of rupees per year. For the 4 crores of the Harijans all over the country this is a very modest amount.

The formation of the League and the vigorous agitation for the abolition of untouchability all over the country augur well for the future of Hinduism. The moral conscience of a large section of people has been stirred to its very depths, and the conviction seems to be gaining ground that Hinduism cannot survive unless it is freed from the curse of untouchability. It is hoped that even those who oppose the movement now will be soon convinced of its desirability when they become aware of the actual state of affairs in the country.

The success of the movement now seems to be only a question of time. And once it has come to a successful course, must begin the much greater work of

the cultural elevation of the Harijans through the dissemination of the truths of Hindu religion and philosophy among them.

## SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA, SANNYASIN AND TEACHER

*By Sister Devamata*

### VI

THE Spanish Carmelite monk and mystic, St. John of the Cross, declares in his "Spiritual Maxims": "Faith is the greatest shelter of the soul." It was in this safe shelter that Swami Ramakrishnananda sought refuge. If storms of doubt ever overtook him, he weathered them in silence and alone. He never made them known to others. His faith seemed impregnable, whatever the stress of circumstance. As a youth, when he was frequenting the Brahmo-Samaj, he had been assailed by vague questionings; but the touch of Sri Ramakrishna's thought had dispelled them, almost without words. Tests he had, and severe ones. There were moments in his public life when it seemed as if the Master had abandoned him, leaving him to the mercy of an indifferent multitude, but he did not waver. One occasion I recall, which tried his trust so bitterly that he buried his face in his hands and as he cried aloud for release, great heroic tears trickled through his fingers; yet he never doubted the one on whom he called.

Faith was to Swami Ramakrishnananda the basic support of all spiritual living. Without it, he believed, there could be no true devotion, no higher vision, no life even. "Faith in God is the foundation of all life, both spiritual and physical," he said one day. "If you

should put faith in God on one side and the Lord of the whole universe on the other, I would take faith in God. Blessed is the man who has faith. He is the happiest of men, because he is free from all anxiety. We are all only puppets in the hands of God. When we understand this, all pride and ambition, all vanity and egotism, go. For that reason is the man blessed who has faith, because he has realised his puppet nature."

One evening when there were several visitors at the Mylapore Math, one of them asked: "How can we get such faith as Prahlada had?" The Swami replied: "The more you can purify yourself, the more that faith will come. Although Prahlada was put into boiling oil, although he was thrown under the foot of a mad elephant and over the highest precipice, he was not hurt, because of his faith. But it was not blind faith that he had. It was a faith based on realisation; and if you have the same faith, you will be more powerful than the whole universe. Nothing can put you down.

"Our faith is too faltering. Few of us believe in God all the time. As long as we have three or four rupees in our pocket we think we can depend on ourselves. Only when the last anna is gone and we do not know where to get another, do we begin to trust in God. But the man who depends on himself

is never safe, while the man who has perfect faith in God is never in danger."

A kindling devotion was the natural outgrowth of a faith such as Swami Ramakrishnananda possessed. His name, which was that of his Master, bore witness to it. By his own fervour was he baptized, a baptism of fire. It burned through and through him. One felt the glow of it even at his approach. Detached he might be, but never lukewarm. He gave no quarter to indolent indifference. Man must love God with his whole soul and mind and heart if he love Him at all. To give his own words: "If you would find that Supreme Reality which lies behind all these hollow unrealities, you must be wholly devoted to It. You must worship the living God with your whole heart and give up the worship of things that die. You must feel the utter hollowness of everything but Truth, as Nachiketas did. Wealth, kingdoms, enjoyments, power, were to him nothing—less than zero. He wanted nothing but Truth and Truth was bound to come to him. You must have the same firm conviction about the hollowness of the material world and seek God with undivided devotion; then He will surely come to you."

The Swami accepted no compromise and asked none of God. There could be no bartering for the treasures of spiritual vision and union with the Divine. One avenue alone lay open to their attainment. "There is but one Yoga and that is devotion," he said to me one day. "The Karmi may say that he attains the Supreme by non-attachment or *Vairagyam*; the Jnani, that he gets there by the path of discrimination; and the Raja-Yogi by the path of concentration. But if the Karmi has not devotion in his practice of non-at-

tachment; or the Jnani, in his discrimination; or the Raja-Yogi, in his concentration; he will not realise his Ideal. Devotion is the only means for all."

Some one asked: "What kind of devotion takes us to God?" The Swami replied, "The child's devotion to the mother." "But is that a rational way to reach Him?" "How long do you reason? So long as you have not arrived at a conclusion," was the Swami's quick answer. "Why does the baby go to the mother? Because it has reasoned out that she is the best friend it has. And why do you go to God? Because you have reasoned out that He and no one else can help you. So as the baby goes to its mother, you turn to God."

Another person present put the question: "What is meant in the Gita by steadfastness in devotion?" "Steadiness in devotion," the Swami said, "means that though you may be busy with many things, still your mind is always turned toward God. You may not feel the same ardour always, but so long as the hunger for devotion to God is there, you are steady in devotion."

Swami Ramakrishnananda's ardour of devotion appeared unvarying, and it carried him with irresistible force to complete surrender. He yielded himself utterly to the Ideal and never was there a more willing captive. Surrender meant to him the culminating triumph of all spiritual effort. "Sri Krishna and other great Teachers have taught many different ways of going to God," he declared, "but in the end they threw all aside and said simply: 'Have complete self-surrender'. Without absolute self-abnegation no one can realise God. You must know that of yourself you can do nothing. Until you recognise this, realisation of God will not come. If a man is able to see things as they should be seen and to

analyse himself properly, he will understand that he is wholly in the hands of a Higher Power. Then he says: 'When man's vanity is puffed up by name, fame, importance, wealth, he has no hope to reach Thee, O Lord. Thou comest to those who have none else to call their own. Thou belongest to the poor, the lowly, to those who have nothing in this world. Come to me, O Lord! All I have is Thine. It never was mine. Thou art all my wealth.'"

Surrender was a favourite theme with the Swami. He recurred to it constantly and whenever he talked on it, his words burned deep into the heart. Spiritual fruition would come, he believed, only to him who had the desire and the power to yield himself up wholly captive. All must be given if all was to be received. "Man is too often afraid to surrender," he said to me one evening. "He thinks he will

lose something; but he is never a loser when he gives himself absolutely to the Lord. Only when he is guided by God does he cease to blunder, because then God works through his hands, sees through his eyes, speaks with his tongue, and he becomes a perfect instrument in the Hands of God. He is directed by God in everything.

"Pray to God constantly: 'O Lord, Grant that I may know my own nothingness and that Thou art all in all. Help me to realise that I am a mere instrument in Thy Hand and that all is done by Thee.' When a man comes to understand this, he is truly happy because he feels secure. He knows all his actions are guided by God, Who will never misdirect him. The man who acts on his own responsibility is sure to make mistakes, but the man who surrenders everything to God always acts wisely."

## THE SYSTEM OF RAMANUJA WITH SIDE-LIGHTS ON THOSE OF MADHVA AND SANKARA \*

*By K. A. Krishnaswamy Aiyer, B.A.*

### *Introduction*

THE controversy between idealism and realism is as old as philosophy itself. In the West, Idealism secured a number of notable victories under the leadership of Kant, Hegel, Locke, Berkeley, Mill, Croce, Gentile etc., while Realism, although it often sustained defeats, never altogether lost her hold on the common minds. The pendulum of thought is again swinging towards Realism, mainly as the result of the marvellous advance of physical science. In America Pragmatism, New Realism and Behaviourism have be-

come the cultured cults; and in England, the decisive views of thinkers like Bertrand Russell and others are distinctly opposed to Idealism, which is rapidly retracing its steps before the aggressive march of its opponents. Realism and Pluralism have once again regained their lost influence; and, supported by the dominant voices of the scientists, are likely to hold the field for a long time to come.

In India the history of philosophic movement presents a similar spectacle. Sankara's monism was keenly opposed

\* The substance of a paper read at the 8th Session of Indian Philosophical Congress, Mysore.

by Ramanuja and Madhva, and after these and through the influence of their writings, a number of scholastic thinkers reopened the polemical warfare between Illusionism and Realism which has continued down to the present day. Between Physical Science and Philosophical speculation a most intimate relation exists, and new discoveries in the one must lead to inevitable repercussions in the sphere of the other, affecting more especially Realism and Realistic theology. The old notions of substance, cosmic time, infinite space, and universal causality must undergo revision, and the world of Science recede farther and farther from the world of ordinary perception. The claims of consciousness as a basic or independent entity must be re-examined, and many sanctified myths of religion abandoned once for all. The idea of revelation must submit to modification, and its authoritativeness limited and narrowed. Every form of faith must pass through a fire-bath of fact and verification; and no one school, however ancient or numerous, can afford to stand still, if it is to convince culture, or influence life. The inner realm (Psychological or psycho), as well as the outer, spread before us in Time and Space, has to be studied with care, and the new truths so discovered must replace the old dogmas. The very slogan of the modern thinkers is 'no absolute truth.' Truths emerge in experience, and are tentative, subject to verification. The universal laws so-called are only generalised experience condensed into formulas, which are not eternal, but enjoy a brief vogue. Experience must continue to determine knowledge, and observation cast it into inevitable new moulds. Modern Thought denies it finality.

Philosophy is thus driven into a corner by science, and its power and

ambition relentlessly confined to a very narrow groove, the dubious and dangerous groove of sheer faith or assumption. It would therefore be not only profitable but necessary to re-examine the foundations of Theologies and systems of Thought which have long enjoyed popularity, and to reassess their strength and firmness; and more than any other the pretensions of Vedanta as the Science of Reality.

Hinduism, as a Religion or a Philosophy, must face the storm of modern research and mere old Shibboleths or papal bulls can scarcely help to lengthen her life by a single day. Beliefs hid in the dark corners of the heart must be dragged out in the open arena of discussion, and their basis, either scriptural or traditional, subjected to the severe scrutiny of Reason and experience. Facts must overthrow fancies; and faiths, divested of their imaginative elements, be reinstalled in the hearts of men.

Idealism is comparatively more secure against the deadly onslaughts of Science. As it deals with mind and its creations,—the ideas,—it need not come into serious conflict with the progress of empirical knowledge. On the contrary, for Realism the contest is unequal and fatal. In India, it is hard to distinguish between a religion and its philosophy. They are so intertwined that theological doctrines are defended on philosophical grounds and philosophical truths are assumed on theological authority. In Europe secular thought was long ago emancipated to a large extent from the leading-strings of Religion, but in this country we have yet to achieve that independence, without, of course, prejudice to the interests of truth, and in perfect harmony with the declarations of Science. I consider it therefore a necessary, though not a light, task to

review the position of Hindu Realism as it prevails at present, and I choose the School of Ramanuja for my purpose, not only because it is typical of all realistic thought of our own day but because it has a philosophical importance of its own. Many of my observations may equally apply to Madhva whose Realism is less compromising, and far more developed in detail than Ramanuja's. Few modern concepts have advanced farther than Madhva's in pushing Realism to its ultimate issues.

*Ramanuja (1019—1139 A.D.)*

Ramanuja's interpretation of the *Brahma Sutras* marks a schism from the long established School of Sankara. Like Madhva after him, he rejected the theory of Maya or Illusion and fought for the maintenance of the realities and distinctions of common life. The majority of people had suffered the doctrine of Maya to sit like a nightmare on their beliefs. On the one hand, the Vedas declared in unambiguous terms the Unity of Brahman, and Pantheism seemed to be the sanctioned creed. On the other hand, facts of experience eloquently demanded recognition of multiplicity and real distinctions. The spirit of the times cried for a teacher who could release the human mind from the horrid grip of Illusionism, and rehabilitate life with joy and beauty. Neither the dicta of the Vedas should be disallowed, nor the pronouncements of common sense denounced. Ramanuja came to fulfil these conditions. By his extraordinary intellect, skill in dialectics and wide learning, he succeeded in giving a new orientation to the Vedic teaching, and his *Sri Bhasya* is the remarkable product of his extraordinary intellect. He agreed with Sankara that the prevailing tone of the *Upaishads* was Monistic, but denied the Monism that necessitated an Illusionism as an inevitable drag.

The history of Southern India shows that the Hindu Community during this period was in the midst of a religious ferment. Sankara's doctrines, pitched too high for the common mind, were misunderstood and misapplied. Rare scholars mused in corners on the ethereal oneness which nearly benumbed their faculties. The metaphysical truths were thrown into syllogistic forms till they were reduced to intellectual abstractions. Fervently religious natures found in them nothing to comfort or cheer them. A reaction followed. The Puranas and the epics were read with avidity. Idol worship and temples acquired a new interest. Miracles were readily believed in, and every deity was clothed with attributes most agreeable to the devotees. Theism triumphed and metaphysics amused only the erudite few. A new society known as that of the Bhagavatas, which must have long existed in the country unknown and secluded, now suddenly became popular and active. Its members were still not numerous but they were scattered over large areas, and the cult broke through barriers of caste and custom. In important centres like Conjeevaram and Sri Rangam, men belonging to this group formed organisations and held private meetings at which belief in a Personal God was expounded; devout songs were sung, and stories were related of extraordinary religious experiences. Every one was encouraged to hold communion with God, and eagerly believed that his life was under the personal care of the deity he adored. This class soon became a brotherhood, a set of freemasons who, though all poor, were ready to fly to the help of their brother when he was in trouble and even to lay down their lives for their glowing faith. They were known to the outside world as Vaishnavas.

Among the members of this faith, the most renowned at the time for the purity of his life and the loftiness of his teaching was a poor Non-Brahmin called Tirukkatchi Nambi (Devotee of Conjeevaram). He was reputed to be so holy as to be able to hold *tele-a-tete* talks with God *Varada*, the idol representing Vishnu. It was but natural that Ramanuja whose devout nature sympathised with the beliefs of all pious men, irrespective of birth or denomination, soon became an admirer of this holy man, and was admitted to the secret brotherhood. It was equally natural that when he found his mind torn between his allegiance to the Vedas and his craving to re-establish the realities of life, he communicated his doubts to the Nambi; and obtained from the latter a promise that he would place the question before the deity at his next meeting, and report the result. This was no sooner proposed than carried out. Ramanuja to his infinite relief learned that the deity upheld the distinctions of life, and that of the soul from Brahman. This incident in the life of Ramanuja might appear insignificant to us, but the times were peculiar and highly charged with the spirit and enthusiasm of theistic revival, when visions, prophecies, oracles, dreams and miracles were the order of the day.

Meanwhile, things were taking a new turn at Sri Rangam. Yamunacharya, the Head of the Vaishnava Brotherhood, who was on his death-bed sent a messenger to bring young Ramanuja to Sri Rangam. His intention was to utilise the intellectual gifts of Ramanuja for the advancement of the cause of the Sri Vaishnava cult, which he was sure would be safe in Ramanuja's hands. Ramanuja hastened to Sri Rangam, only to find himself, alas, a few hours too late. The saint had died. Ramanuja keenly regretted the

loss of a chance of meeting the saint while still alive, but he noticed a remarkable circumstance. Of the right fingers of the dead body three were bent. What could it mean? Did the saint intend thereby that he had three objects to be fulfilled by Ramanuja? Believing in the probability of his conjecture, he cried out aloud with all the fervour of his soul: "O Great Saint, I am ready to carry out your commands. I make this vow to that effect, before all. Is the writing of a Commentary on the Brahma Sutras, according to the Bhagavata school, one of your wishes?" He paused for a response. One of the fingers slowly straightened out. He then put two more questions and the other fingers similarly straightened out. Ramanuja's highest ambition was now realised. He found himself at the head of a community of religious men whom he could serve with all his zeal and capacity. He unreservedly placed his genius and learning at their disposal, and the Sri Bhashya was the glorious outcome.

To understand clearly the causes that led to the promulgation of the three different systems of thought and belief on the part of Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva, it is fundamental to bear in mind their several attitudes towards Truth. Sankara relied on experience and reason as the only guides to an understanding of Truth and found his conclusions marvellously confirmed in the Upanishads. Ramanuja and Madhva on the other hand, started with an implicit faith in the Vedic utterances interpreted in the light of practical life, and employed reason to justify that faith. Their procedure was diametrically opposed to and their conclusions poles asunder from, those of Sankara. To ascertain Truth, Sankara studied life with a perspicacity sharpened by learning. He thus cleared the ground

for an original and courageous interpretation of the Upanishads, laying aside even tradition when it clashed with his direct derivation of Truth from universal experience. The other two thinkers assumed their Principles, *God* and the *Individual Soul*, as revealed by the Vedas, and troubled themselves no further to place them on a rational basis. They both interpreted the scriptures so as to harmonise with the realities and distinctions of common life. Madhva supported pluralism while Ramanuja agreeing with him substantially, invested his system with a monistic garb by explaining that the souls and the material world are the body of God, so that there is one only Reality, God, of whom the rest are parts. Reality is one organic whole. In this respect Ramanuja's idea comes nearer to the Vedic Teaching which constantly lays emphasis on Unity, while Madhva has to explain away the Unity as figurative.

Much of the reasoning employed by Ramanuja and Madhva to establish the superiority of Vishnu over Siva is uninteresting to a modern. The Brahma Sutras treat of the Neuter "Brahman", and the commentators may break each other's heads over the question whether Vishnu or Siva was meant by the term. Badarayana, the author of the Sutras, coolly leaves it as a bone of contention among the succeeding theologians. Sankara finds that it serves his purpose admirably, as in his system both personal and impersonal concepts of Reality are provided with their proper places. On the whole, all the three agree in the following points:—(1) that a man should not be decoyed by sensual pleasures; (2) that life on earth is, at the best, full of woes; and (3) that freedom from birth and death is to be won only by control of passions, acts of devotion, self-sacrifice, renunciation

and True Knowledge. All the three stress the need of securing Divine Grace by a holy life free from attachment.

#### *Doctrines*

Stripped of sectarian dogmas, Ramanuja's teachings may be summed up as follows:—There is one God and he is a Personal Being. He is the only Reality. He must be regarded as embodied, the individual souls and inert matter forming his body. As, in common life, the soul is connected with a body, so is the Supreme Being wearing, in his turn, the souls and matter as His body. He is all-powerful, omniscient and all-merciful. He has infinite auspicious qualities, and He and His constituent body are, down to the very atom, eternal. By Himself He is changeless but His body undergoes periodical swelling and shrinking which correspond to *Creation and Dissolution*—processes which He allows for His sport. The soul, as well as matter, is subject to this expansion and contraction. During the expansion, each soul becomes embodied; and, according to individual Karma, passes through birth and death till, through knowledge of the soul's relation to God—which is one of complete subordination—and through the aid of His grace, the soul attains Release from Samsara or embodiment. Although all-pervading, God has His special residence in the highest world known as Vykuntha and the released souls gain admittance to it and may optionally stay there or move through infinite worlds, enjoying the beautiful vision of God's magnificent creation. The souls then partake of all the power, wisdom and bliss of God, with the exception of the ability to create the world, or control it. The idols in temples are not stones, but God Himself who has assumed that form for the convenience of his devotees. At the inception of creation souls and material objects

are invested with name and form, which they lose in their subtle form at dissolution. While God is greater than the greatest and smaller than the smallest, the soul's size is atomic.

The soul retains its individuality eternally, even after Release. One soul differs from another in its special qualities, but not *qua* soul. All souls are of identical nature but, individually, every soul differs from every other, and the distinction is eternal. Knowledge that qualifies it for Release is not the simple removal of Avidya or ignorance but is of the nature of meditation on the great qualities of God, accompanied with self-surrender and service. Salvation is effected through God's grace so obtained. Inanimate matter is distinct from the soul and God. Each object is real and distinct from the rest.

The Vedas are the only sources through which the existence of God, and His nature as the Creator, Destroyer and the Moral Controller and Saviour, can be known. Scripture is similarly the source of our knowledge of the eternality of the soul as an entity distinct from the body, of its transmigratory life, and of Release. Evil and suffering are the effects of Karma and can be overcome only by Devotion, Prayer and Meditation, and by pious works in the Service of God.

To Madhva (1128-1200 A.D.) as to Ramanuja, God and the individual soul

are transcendent entities to be known only from scripture. Agreeing with Ramanuja in the reality and distinction of God, souls and matter, Madhva differs from him in the following respects. God does not wear the other two categories as His body, but pervades them. The souls are distinct from one another, eternally, by their individual capacity or characteristics. Hence in Release, though each is filled with bliss, the degrees of bliss enjoyed by the souls will never be identical. Each released soul will have a natural conscious body and senses, which enable it to enjoy every kind of imperishable joy. The bliss of Release depends entirely on the soul's consciousness of its distinction from God and from Matter, and of its dependence on God for its salvation. The souls of the Monists or Mayavadins, according to Madhva, are destined to undergo endless suffering in Hell. Even God cannot avert the penalties due to their nature. A third class of souls will be sweltering in the eddies of Samsara helplessly through all time. The fates of the last two classes are irrevocable. To both Ramanuja and Madhva the soul is atomic in size. Both rely alike on scripture to establish God as a Personal Being, and the soul and matter as independent and real entities. The soul is morally free, but this freedom is a gift of God's through mercy.

*(To be continued)*

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# THOUGHTS ON THE STUDY OF ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

*By Manmathanath Majumder, M. A.*

## *Indian Interpretation of History*

TO enter into a philosophical discussion over the study of history may seem to betray a visionary state of mind indulging in vague conjectures and useless abstractions in this absolutely practical world of ours; for history, they say, is purely a study of material interests, pledged only to teach political half-truths and utilitarian views of life. Not only that, the subject itself may lose much of its interest for the readers if it cannot stand by itself, may seem shorn of much of its innate glory and dignity if it has to plume itself with the borrowed grandeur of a subject, only apparently allied to it. It cannot merit serious consideration even, if it fails to substantiate its claim to its own special treatment. Each must exhibit its intrinsic worth to assure its abiding interest for mankind and each must put forth its own claim to be accorded a rightful place in the domain of human mind; and to harness one to the embellishment of the other is a gross violation of the decorum of the law of thought.

But a deeper introspection into the realities of our subjective experiences will convince us of the truth of the thought world, and a closer observation of the contents of our consciousness will reveal to us the nature of our mental thoughts and processes. They are a seething mass, defying all attempts at classification. Thoughts overlap and can be separated into clearly-marked regimes no more effectively than what we can do by throwing a piece of stone

on the surface of a vast mass of water, which divides itself to receive it only to relapse into the original state of homogeneity. The fact is, there is no vacuum in the region of thought to enable us to differentiate one from the other with denominational mark and distinction. It is so leavened with dead uniformity and homogeneity that man in the highest pitch of absorption forgets to think in terms of duality. In our normal state of consciousness and thought we find invariably the same interpenetration of thoughts and ideas intensified into oneness as we dive deep to fathom the depths of our being.

In matters of common interest too, bearing very closely upon the daily needs of life, we can hardly conceive of anything without any intermingling of consciousness, and an isolated single thought is an impossibility in the formation of ideas and concepts. Politics, a subject meant exclusively to determine the relation between the state and the people, has to consider sociology, biology, economics, psychology, religion and traditional beliefs and customs, in order to effect a peaceful atmosphere in the society for the good of the people.

Allied studies of human affairs in the world are imperative on those who seek a conclusive statement on those vital issues of the world, that still divide mankind. Different angles of vision are different studies, suggestive not only of diverse peculiarities of the human mind, but also indicate the objective existence of the inter-allied state of human thought. The state of a country cannot ignore the sanction of

religion embodied in the "social conscience" awake individually in each of the souls in its charge. To override this "social conscience" is to invite revolution and undermine the very basis of the structure of the state. Religion, thus apparently beyond the pale of the recognition of politics, cannot be left out of account with impunity in the administration of the State, pledged to safeguard the vital interests of the people.

This interpenetrativeness of human thoughts gives rise to a doubtful issue, and the Hindus of old hazarded a conclusion, revolutionary in its outlook and effect.

Away in the dim ages of the past, the Vedic Seers intuitively realised the basic formula "एकं सत् निरा बहुया वदन्ति" to serve as a clue to the understanding of the truth, not only about the various religious experiences of the world, but also of the variability of human thoughts. "There is one, sages call it many" and that "many-ness" of the universe is an illusion. Oneness lies at the root beneath the seeming diversities of the world phenomena. The apparent multiplicity of ideas and thoughts may be nullified to the extent we culture the habit of looking beyond the veil of creation and diving deep down into the recesses of our soul where momentarily in the mood of introspection we may experience that shadow of oneness. It is the core of substance towards which the variety of human thoughts moves, and the persistent urge of all the philosophies of the Hindus is towards the oneness whence has proceeded the 'many.' But in spite of the illusiveness of the 'many,' the 'many' still exists to challenge the philosopher on the authority "एकोऽहं बहु स्याम्". Here another truth comes to the forefront of our existence—the ideation of the Divine Will pre-

ceded creation, the external manifestation. Gross existence is an after-effect and man in his daily life, experiences at the outset in the corner of his mind the birth of an idea which is later on materialised into gross existence. Every material manifestation in this world enshrines within it the idea in the subtlest form that gave it shape. These two basic formulae have formed the very corner-stones of Hindu philosophy of creation, and herein do we find the rationale of the theory that in Mahapralaya the world exists in seed form in the Universal Mind of Para Brahman to retain the possibility of future cycles of creation. It never emerges into being out of the void. This cyclic order of creation and dissolution points to the same oneness of the reality and signifies the expansion and contraction of the same principle. "Every evolution is the outcome of the preceding involution" says Swami Vivekananda. What is expressed was incorporated in the Primeval Will and what we experience as distinct thoughts and ideas in the states and processes of mind is immanent in the universal consciousness.

Differentiation comes with expression and as we are concerned with the expression of material objects, we learn to classify our thoughts and ideas into well-marked divisions. Hence we are apt to discriminate and distinguish. Differentiated manifestation is the law of conscious existence and undifferentiated homogeneity is the law of super-conscious life. The One Existence desired to express itself in diverse existences of this visible world, hence the creation to rehabilitate the One in the many. There is no existence in the visible world, but that of the universal One diversified into the varieties of lives and existences. Variation is the distinguishing feature of the manifested universe and this variability of Nature

gradually diminishes and wanes into uniformity and homogeneity on the retrograde process of our thoughts and ideas. As we recede in our thought-processes into ourselves, this vastness and variability of the manifested existence gradually tapers into the potential existence of uniformity and oneness.

This perpetual egress into the known and ingress into the unknown have been proving to be the living processes of both mind and matter since the dawn of creation and this emanation from, and dissolution into, that universal consciousness are the two eternal processes of the world—Evolution and Involution. Nations in the world have identified themselves with either of the two to produce types of their own. These are the two possible viewpoints of mankind to indicate the courses along which they have been moving to attain the desired goal.

Indian thinkers have indicated the methods as "*Neti*" "*Neti*," "*Iti*" "*Iti*." We shall see how far these two different standpoints have affected the courses of evolution of the two civilisations in the East as well as in the West and we reserve the treatment of this topic for future issues.

*(To be continued)*

Now, as is explained in the foregoing lines, each visible phenomenon of the universe is a result of evolution with several stages behind it, incorporating within it the "will" that has moulded it into shape. These unseen processes are kept concealed from the direct vision of man. But even the microscopic changes behind a blade of grass cannot escape the searching scrutiny of Time, the Omnipresent Witness to the workings of the universe. He sifts and gleans, and takes cognisance of the movement of even the smallest atom to record in the Book of Time. The idea has found its most poetic expression in Rabindranath's song, "Speak Thou". The poet invokes therein the past to disgorge the contents that have been garnered in the womb of Time. "Reveal, Oh Time!" says the Poet, "the treasures that lie hidden in your bosom. The petty incidents that escape the notice of the closest observer, escape not Thine eye". Mahakala is wide awake even to the silent dew-drops that blossom the sweet flowers at dead of night. How solemn is the function of a Historian!—the Mahakala, the eternal on-looker over the changes of the universe!

## THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN DREAMING AND WAKING

By R. Marrs, M. A. (Oxon)

*(Continued from page 339)*

**B**EFORE coming to what appears to be a more adequate explanation of the distinction we are considering, reference has to be made to another attempt to solve the riddle, which will be found in a brief essay by Leibnitz, "On the Method of distinguishing Real

from Imaginary Phenomena." He puts forward two proofs of the reality of a phenomenon,—the one that it is true if "it is in agreement with the whole course of life, especially if very many others affirm that the same agrees with their own phenomena also; for that

other substances similar to us exist, is not only probable, but indeed, certain, as I shall soon say." The other, he expresses as follows: "But the most powerful proof of the reality of phenomena, which indeed alone suffices, is the success in predicting future phenomena from the past and present, whether that prediction is founded in reason, or in the hypothesis thus far succeeding, or in the usage thus far observed. Nay," he adds, "although this entire life were said to be nothing but a dream, and the visible world nothing but a phantasm, I should call this dream or phantasm real enough, if, using reason well, we were never deceived by it." On both proofs Leibnitz himself throws doubt. He denies them to be demonstrative because they prove not metaphysical but only a *moral certainty*; and continues: "and thus, by no argument can it be absolutely demonstrated that there are bodies, nor anything keep certain well ordered dreams from being objects to our mind, which are considered by us as true, and on account of the agreement among themselves with respect to use are equivalent to truths." And, he suggests, "what if our nature were perchance not capable of real phenomena, .....what, indeed, if this whole short life were nothing but a certain long dream, and we should awake only in death?—a conception such as the Platonists seemed to have. For since we are destined for eternity, and this whole life, although it should continue many thousands of years, has in respect of eternity the value of a point, *how small will be the interposition of such a little dream in the full truth, the ratio of which is much less than that of the dream to life?*"

With reference to Leibnitz's first proof, it is to be noticed that everything we have urged against the dis-

tinction on the ground of consistency would apply here, were it not for this very interesting reservation that the proof is strongest, *if very many others affirm that the same agrees with their own phenomena also*. Leibnitz was clever enough to see all along that you cannot resolve philosophical problems if you start from the isolated individual consciousness. The central idea or motive of his system is the conviction that *many minds exist besides ours*. He saw, what my philosopher insists on, that "from the isolated individual mind there may perhaps be elicited various sorts of subjectivism but no kind of cognition." Few but Leibnitz (and Heraclitus too, as we may judge from his saying:—"The waking have one and the same world but the sleeping turn each into a world of his own", which Kant misquotes in "The dreams of a Ghost seer" as Aristotle's) have realised what the same writer calls, "*the grand central truism that 'objective' means 'shared'*" and that it is therefore a far cry to objectivity when we set out from the unshareable." It was perhaps something of this nature that Sankara had in mind when he spoke of a kind of conventional reality for the many. Hence for a discernment of dreams the criterion is now indicated; I must appeal to more than one consciousness. "What is dreamed by one is a dream: What is dreamed by several is a cognition." If then I cannot help seeing pink rats I must appeal to those present for a verification of my cognition. Now this seems common sense but it is also sheer Kantism as you will agree if you care to refer to Kant's *Kritik of Judgment*. But the best metaphysics is always consonant with common sense. "Cognitions and judgments," says Kant, "along with the conviction that accompanies them admit of universal

*communicability* (or shareability); for otherwise there would be no harmony between them and the object, and they would be collectively a mere subjective play of the\* representative powers, exactly as scepticism desires." Shareability, or an appeal to the common sense of many individuals, is the test of the objective. No cognition which is not shareable is valid. There is another passage which indicates that Kant realised the true significance of a principle which few philosophers have noted in his works. It is this: "And this common sense is assumed *without relying on psychological observations, but simply as the necessary condition of the universal communicability of our knowledge, which is presupposed in every logic and in every principle of knowledge that is not sceptical.*" Applying this principle to our difficulty, we decide that what is shared by all is a real phenomenon, what remains the thought or image of one only is not a real phenomenon. Dreams are clearly not shareable and thus are not true phenomena. There are however different kinds of sharing:—e. g., (1) I dream I meet a friend in Colombo: that is a kind of sharing. (2) You and I have the same dream that we meet: that also is a kind of sharing. (3) After our coincident dream we actually meet and what we dreamt as happening really happens. How can these different kinds of sharing be distinguished? Again, you may say, if cognition is merely sharing, did not the sun once go round the earth, since everybody used to think so? And if we all went mad, would not  $2+2$  really equal 5? And nothing is true to philosophers for they all disagree! An ingenious answer that drives us to

the heart of the problem; for it is as deceptive as it is ingenious. It purposely ignores a very real difference between two aspects of thought, between what used to be called understanding and reason, but what we may now call—borrowing from the prince of Kantians—on the one side primary constructive and automatic, on the other secondary critical and reflective thought (Kant's "constitutive" and "regulative" aspects of consciousness). Now primary or constructive thought (which may never seem like thought to the ordinary consciousness) builds up the world we call objective and which we are coerced by its common possession to see alike: secondary thought reflects upon the construction and reveals it, but charges it with inconsistency in the philosophical sense of the term. That does not matter. Primary thought may be inconsistent in the end but its constructions are nevertheless such that we are bound to agree upon them. Let reflexion find what difficulty it may in these constructions, it cannot alter them. It is just such constructions, (the tables, chairs, men, buildings, animals and men of our experience, the posts and walls and pots and pans of Sankara) which compose our realities. And it is experiences which are not common to many or shareable, that are pronounced subjective. Such are dreams, and at last we seem to have solved the riddle. Subjects dream where they disagree: they wake or cognise where they agree. Now put me to sleep under observation. If I dream that I am discussing a very difficult problem most inadequately before the Vivekananda Society, the observers must decide. If the Secretary is put to sleep and dreams that he is listening to the same discussion and is very bored with it, the same observers must decide. Some-

\* Sankara on representation as opposed to presentation. Cf. also the view of certain Buddhist philosophers.

body must have been dreaming. How are we to decide? Only by reference to the opinion of more consciousnesses, and not their agreement but their coerced agreement. If you are coerced to agree that I am floundering about this subject and that the Secretary is very really bored, then I am not dreaming but really reading this paper and the Secretary is really bored. Waking cognition then is an actual or virtual agreement of the automatic unreflective subjects of consciousness: dreaming is their virtual disagreement. Reflective thought may prove inconsistency of the products of unreflective thought, but it cannot alter them. The philosopher may convict our meeting of all kinds of unrealities and metaphysical inconsistencies of space, time and causality. Here we are and meet and we cannot help agreeing that we meet. We at least agree in our philosophical inconsistency, though we rarely agree in our dreams.

Let us now see where we are in relation to the distinction between waking and dreaming. The distinction between primary and constitutive or constructive and automatic thought on the one side, and secondary reflective thought on the other, is offered as a ground of differentiation of cognition or knowledge of objects (objectivity) from the purely subjective and unshareable. We have first of all our ordinary cognition, *e.g.*, tables, chairs and other animal beings, everything which is an object or possible object of actual experience, which we see alike and which is in a sense shared by many subjects of cognition. Our objective world is a product of primary automatic functions, such as substance, cause and the like. Whatever contradictions reflection may see in the heart of such functions,—consider, *e.g.*, the irrationality of time and space and the causal concept—how-

ever inconsistent the result may be, we agree in our inconsistency. What is more, primary functions are not self-conscious in their operation. In that sense they are automatic. Without any deliberate exercise of self-consciousness, we objectify our experience as a world of this building, these chairs and tables, and those human beings. Open your eyes, and by unconscious inference you have constructed your shareable world. What now happens to dreaming? We call our waking experience cognition, the cognition of objects; and regard cognition as the agreement or virtual agreement of subjects of cognition, you and them and me. Dreaming is their virtual disagreement. The cognition of waking experience is a kind of consistency and shareability—agreement in an illusion, if you like, but a coerced agreement which we cannot help. Dreaming on the other hand, be it never so consistent so far as concerns serial connectedness, from night to night, lacks the feature of shareability. Cognise and the world cognises with you, dream and you dream alone. That which we cannot help picturing communally is cognition. What we cannot picture communally is a dream. And the test in a case of doubt is an appeal to more subjects of cognition and their forced agreement. All this seems to be the implication of Sankara's distinction between what can and what cannot be negative and what is and what is not part of every day experience.

But have we here an unailing principle of distinction? "Suppose," my tutor asked, "that when I am asleep in bed I dream that I am asleep in bed; for when asleep we often say 'I am dreaming and shall wake by-and-by.' Or suppose that I always sleep with my eyes open, and at day-break, while I am sleeping with my eyes on the

window, I dream that dawn is lighting the window. "I do not yet follow how you principle"—"Neither do I" our Kantian interrupts hurriedly—"and I am now racked by the riddle whether to be cheated is to be cheated when the cheat is the same as truth" that is, whether to dream is to dream when the dream is the same as waking experience. There seems to be no principle or criterion of distinction in such a case. Not to be baffled, however, he makes one more suggestion. Thus our whole experience covers both waking and sleeping. In this whole, waking seems to include dreaming but dreaming cannot include waking. In my waking state I know that I dream: this follows from the proposition that I must wakefully know that I wake. But I am not awake when I only dream that I am dreaming. Does this really help? Consider the following devilish puzzle which occurs to him in answer: "Godfather," said his godchild, "is it wrong to dream that you steal?" "Well", he answered, "it might mean that you would steal, or had stolen." "You see", said the godchild, "I dreamt that I had had a dream that I took an apple and wasn't sorry; and I dreamt that I hated having had the dream. Ought I to be glad?"

It seems then that we have not really in any absolute sense, settled the problem and that Nietzsche was perhaps right when he accused Kant of explaining his empirical reality (Appearance) *by means of a means* (Vermöge eines Vermögens). It is a case of appearance to appearance to appearance and so on *ad infinitum*. Sankara replied to the argument that if the world is a fiction, then the teaching of the Upanishads, as part of it, is a fiction, that if a man dreams he is bitten by a snake, the bite is unreal but not the dream. But the dream, we may still say,

appears to a dream. Our waking experience is appearance only, not Reality. From the standpoint of Reality there is really no distinction between the two. So Schopenhauer, whose spiritual affinity with the Indian outlook you all know, wrote: "Although individual dreams are distinguished from real life by the fact that they do not fit into that continuity which runs through the whole of experience, and the act of awakening brings this into consciousness, yet that very continuity of experience belongs to real life as its form, and the dream on its part can point to a similar continuity in itself. If, therefore, we consider the question *from a point of view external to both*, there is no distinct difference in their nature, and we are forced to concede to the poets that life is a long dream." It is simply that within the limitations of appearance there is a sort of principle of distinction, on the basis whether of container and contained, or of a communal thought references implying other subjects of cognition for whom,—whatever may be the differences in the individual pictures of each subject,—the object is "a picture of coincidence." Are these subjects of cognition really constructing a common shareable world? It is the first condition of normal objectivity to believe so. However absurd the forms of objectivity may prove to be when subjected to the rational criticism of reflective reason, they are the root of the only inevitable world we have. "To dispute about its reality," says Schopenhauer, "can only occur to a mind perverted by oversubtlety". Error belongs to the province of the abstract, of reflective reason, and it is on this plane, not on that of practical unreflective naive experience of the outer world, that cases can come under consideration in respect of which it must for ever

remain uncertain whether they were dreams or reality. It is on this plane too that life may appear to be a dream, a "great connected and consistent dream" as our Kantian phrased it, or, in Stout's phrase "a collective hallucination", but still a dream. Within the dream for the individual, there remains the distinction between the long dream of the whole and the short dream of the disconnected parts (in sleep), the anomaly of a dream within a dream. It would seem absurd, however, to call one more real than another merely because it was longer, if both, apart from their duration, exhibit in other respects the same features, since the duration of a life-time as Leibnitz pointed out, is the tiniest fraction of a pin-point compared with eternity. What more can we now say than that you can dream that you dream, or more generally you can know that you are wrong? Which is, in the last resort, equivalent to the Kantian position that *you can have conditioned knowledge that you have not unconditioned knowledge.*

At this stage of my investigation of this perplexing puzzle I fell fast asleep and dreamt the oddest dream about the dreamer Plato. Plato was a wonderful dreamer. He dreamt, says Voltaire, that human beings were originally one and that for their very grave crimes they were punished by being split into males and females—a devilish punishment if you reflect on it. (Voltaire's statement by the way is not strictly correct. There were, says the Symposium, originally three sexes, man woman, and the Androgynous, that is beings composed of both sexes: these God decided for their arrogance to cut in two). Well, I dreamt (along with Voltaire, though Voltaire and I, I fear, are not sufficient to make the dream objective) that Plato dreamt he had forgotten to insert a section in the

Timaeus. This section contained a dream of his, which cannot have been true of course, because he refers to Shakespeare and flying machines. However his dream was this:—

When the great Demiurge (your Indian Indra) had filled the universe with an infinity of earths, wearied by this stupendous outburst of creative activity, he left it to the inferior demons to mould each his particular plot after his heart's desire. Demogorgon, a very human deity, was given the comparatively infinitesimal portion of slime we call the Earth to play with. Now Demogorgon was a fellow of inventive character though with an incorrigible tendency to attempt serious things, and withal a sorry bungler when it came to the point. When he thought he had produced something really fine, he paused to rest awhile, and with infinite self complacency boasted that his creation was the best of all possible worlds. "Truly," said his friends bitterly, "that is no excuse for it. Could you not have contrived to omit evil, injustice, error, crime and pain? You have plagued your creatures with earthquakes, famines, hereditary and epidemic diseases, and every assortment of natural misfortunes. Nor is it to your credit that men are engaged in constant warfare with one another for no apparent reason. Is it not foolish and unkind to create internal dissension among them when they are already decimated by plague, small pox, malaria, consumption, sleeping sickness and thousand and one natural accidents by land and sea? What a foolish animal is this that adds to its natural calamities and dangers, a multitude of mental worries arising from its innate dishonesty and litigiousness! Your world is a joke and a sore shame. Come now, most serious of demons, answer us one simple

question: Can you fit the mosquito or the flea into any reasonable scheme of existence? "Demogorgon blushed; for the poor fellow had not foreseen all that would take place on his earth—and answered lamely: "It is true there is both moral and physical evil in my world. But had there been no pain, happiness would have been unintelligible to them. And had there been no error, it would never have occurred to them that they were right. And if I had not made them radically wicked, they would never have conceived those fine moral ideals which even you must admire. 'If nobody falls into temptation, the thing becomes absurd'—(here he was quoting from an exceedingly minor story of modern times). I defy you to create a being who will comprehend good and yet not know the bad. As for the flea, I was afraid man might oversleep himself: so I invented a creature that would irritate him into wakefulness." (Demogorgon was here plagiarising from one of his more feeble creatures, Cleanthes the Stoic). "Besides, you are looking at things before they have reached their full development. Turn this way"—here he pointed to the right: for you must understand that these demons, being timeless creatures, have only to look at another side of things to see them twenty centuries in advance:—"survey man in the full development of his intellectual and mechanical genius. I doubt whether you have a Plato, a Shakespeare, a Beethoven, a Kant or a Zeppelin in your schemes of existence, or whether you are able enough to conceive the heights and depths of moral grandeur and intellectual subtlety that mark the twentieth-century man. You cannot surely fail to comprehend my idea of a general progress from the imperfect and unformed to the perfect and

beautiful. Do but observe man when he has become civilised, cultured, refined, moral, graceful in mind and body and has invested this poor piece of mud with beauty and sublimity. Are not beauty and sublimity the properties and products of my creature, man? Let man's poetry, his art, his passion, his devotion be his most beautiful apology". "So they would be," retorted the creator of an inhabited planet no little distance from ours, "if man had not also invented lust, cupidity, hatred, envy, vindictiveness, duplicity and hypocrisy. What does your own Voltaire say: Do you believe that men no longer murder each other as they did in early days? Have they ceased to be 'liars, cheats, traitors, ungrateful wretches and robbers; weak, feeble, lazy and envious; gluttons and drunkards; avaricious, ambitious and blood-thirsty; slanderers, libertines, fanatics, hypocrites and fools?' Or again: "These," says one of Voltaire's inventions, "are but shadows in a beautiful picture." "Your friend who was hanged the other day," said the other, "must have been mocking the world's misery. The shadows of which you speak are horrible blots." "It is men who make the blots," said he, "and they cannot act otherwise than they do." "It is no fault of theirs then" said the other. "Your greatest philosopher, Kant, condemned his own race when he said, 'We view with the greatest distaste the appearance of man upon the earth.'—And if you are prone to think that human nature can be better known in a civilised state, then you must listen to a long sad litany of complaints of secret falsehood, intellectual dishonesty, ingratitude, hatred, deceitful geniality, cupidity and abnormal vice. Your own creatures, don't you see, have found you out.

"You spoke just now of their intellectual subtlety. Truly you have given

them *that*, for their profoundest conviction is that the world is a fiction of the mind and the mind itself a fiction of the mind! Life, they now say, is a dream and withal a bad dream. My dear fellow, they no longer believe in us or in anything. You surely didn't foresee a philosopher and indeed a whole nation who should write down before your very eyes 'God is dead', as though it were an obvious truth! If I had created such a being I should feel personally insulted and should be inclined to exterminate the whole brood". "It is true" pleaded Demogorgon, "that there are evil and unbelief in my little world. I never posed as infallible. It is only men who think me that. I was becoming embarrassed with their extravagant adulation: and my modesty prompted me to encourage a little

atheism. However I see my mistake now. I ought never to have allowed a suspicion of mistrust in myself. I am even a trifle suspicious of philosophy in general: hence I have inspired most men with a mistrust of it." "That is always your method", was the reply, "cure evil by evil". "Well," concluded Demogorgon, for he felt he had produced something to be ashamed of: "I am tired now and am going to bed for a few hours" (which by the way, among immortals, correspond to a few thousand years). "Let us leave men to themselves for a while and see what sort of mess they will make of things".

And waking I found myself in the 20th Century wondering what men could make of the world, if they would only conceive the idea of making something of it!

## AN EXPOSITION OF TANTRA SASTRA

*By Thakur Brajmohan Singh, B.A., Bar-at-Law*

"In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death."

SCHOPENHAUER

"If those words of Schopenhauer's required any endorsement, I should willingly give it as the result of my own experience during a long life devoted to the study of many philosophies and many religions."

F. MAXMULLER

### *The Source of the Tantras*

The Tantras derive their main teachings from that fountain head of ancient wisdom which is known as the 'Sruti'.<sup>1</sup> Some prejudiced minds be-

longing to other schools of religious thought did, no doubt, raise a storm of fruitless controversy to disprove this claim on the ground that some of its doctrines had not got the alleged scriptural sanction.<sup>2</sup> Inspired by selfish motives, they attacked the very root of its origin to belittle or lower its importance in the eyes of the general public. Several monographs, treatises and commentaries came to be written from time to time in denunciation of the Tantric cult with a view to check its rise and development; but it

1. "श्रुतिपथगलितानां मानवानान्तु तन्त्रम्"  
(सूत संहिता—मुक्त खंड).

2. "आगमप्रामाण्यम्" By Swami Yama-nacharya & "तत् शुद्धाख्यं प्रकरणम्" by Bhat-tarak Shri Vamadeva (Trivandrum series).

weathered all stress and storm with such admirable success that we still find a fairly large number of its followers in all parts of India, and in some of even America. (Vide International Journal of Tantric Order, American Edition, Tantric Press, New York.)

### *Religion—Its Origin and Growth*

Man is naturally and essentially a religious being. There never was a time in the history of humanity when there was no religion. Even the primitive man, before he was ushered into the full blaze of modern civilisation, had his own means, methods and forms of worship which his crude or undeveloped mind could imagine and invent. Religion, truly speaking, is an inner urge of the embodied soul (जीवात्मा) for perfect union with, or, still better, for the realization of its own identity with, the Supreme Spirit (परमात्मा), of which it is an essence. Now this inner urge to gain its objective, is not uniformly the same in its expression or self-determination or expansion, with all men at all times and in all countries. That is to say, social, moral, political, intellectual, physical, and above all, individual or collective "Samskaras" (hereditary tendencies)—all, or some of them, play an important part in determining the religious condition of a particular society or country at a given time.

Since the whole world or "Samsara"—as the Sanskrit word connotes<sup>3</sup>—is in a constant state of vibration or motion, no form of earthly creation can ever remain stationary. Consequently, these said causes must also inevitably

change with the times giving birth to such a system or systems of religious beliefs as may harmonise with the existing tastes, tendencies and requirements of the people. Thus we have a variety of faiths to suit and accommodate all grades and conditions of men in society. In his "Mahimnastotra" the learned celestial musician (गणेश्वर)—Pushpadanta, explains with beautiful brevity the causes which give rise to ever so many creeds in the world. He says that different tastes create different ways of reaching and the same truth ("रुचीनां वैविध्यादजु कुटिल नानापथयुषा").

### *Origin of Tantric Cult*

Thus when people were writhing and groaning under the cumbrous yoke of rigid, elaborate Vedic rites and ceremonies, we find an opportune birth of a new faith in our midst, namely, 'Tantricism,' which sent a wave of refreshing message of peace and relief to the Hindu community, badly thirsting for a better, more suitable and more manageable form of religion than the one of the Vedas they already had. This briefly tells us how the *Tantric Dharma* came into existence in India. While describing the characteristics of the four different Ages, or Cyclical periods of time, which our world has, according to Hindu Scriptures, to pass through, the Lord Shiva in the 'Mahabharata Tantra,' gives a very vivid picture of the moral, physical, intellectual and religious degeneration of the society of the present age of Iron (कलियुग). Continuing further, He explains how under the circumstances stated, the sacred Commandments of the Vedas cannot be practically and successfully carried out to any beneficial end. Thus the Lord concludes by giving the "raison-de-etre" of Tantricism as something more appropriate and

3. संसरत्यस्मादिति । सं+सृ गतौ घञ् । संसरणम्

adaptable to the changed order of things.\*

#### *Authorship of the Tantras*

The supposed authorship of the Tantras is ascribed to God Shiva, one of the deities of the Hindu Triad. That is to say, it is a revealed scripture coming from some supernatural agency. In the absence of any criterion to help us in estimating the divine origin of things of this kind, it would here for all practical purposes mean that some person of eminent spiritual and intellectual attainments gathered the required materials from the Vedas, and built up a new structure to accommodate a society of changed tastes, tendencies and conditions. So, whether it was really Mahadeva, the Great God, who first promulgated the Tantras, or some other inspired personality of the type of an ancient Hindu sage, is a point which cannot be successfully considered here. But, if we closely study and examine the existing available material in the light of both the external and internal evidence, we are led to one positive conclusion that the Tantras could not have emanated from the pen of one single individual—no matter who he was, but were the results of various contributions made by different people

or groups of people of different intellectual calibres at different periods of Indian Tantric history. Apart from this, there is a class of Tantric works which seems to be of a much later date and of much inferior order. Interpolations, amendments and mutilations have really disfigured the original text beyond recognition.

The Tantras were not alone to suffer from such literary cruelties, but it can be said, that a greater portion of the past Hindu literature was not immune from a similar fate. It is not our purpose here to enter, at least at present, into the historical or chronological aspect of the question, which is indeed so dark and difficult that it needs a great deal of extensive and intensive study before we can come to any approximate definite results.

I might mention here that it has been almost a regular practice with several of the old Hindu writers of distinction to ascribe the authorship of their literary productions to Divine Agency. Some of the reasons for so doing may be :—1. Their own sense of modesty and selflessness in regard to their own achievements ; 2. To attract a large number of adherents to their own opinions which may not have been otherwise possible ; and 3. To keep the subject above criticism, for it would be a sin against the Church to question the authority of Divine word<sup>5</sup>.

But whosoever they are who wrote the Tantras, and whatever may be the underlying motive of their keeping themselves in obscurity, one cannot but

4 Verses beginning with :

कलिजा मानवा लुब्धाः शिश्नोदरपरायणाः ।  
लोभात्तत् पतिष्यन्ति न करिष्यन्ति साधनम् ॥

and ending with

बहुलेशकरं कर्म वैदिकं भूति साधनम् ।  
कर्तुं न योग्या मनुजाश्चिन्ताध्याकुलमानसाः ॥

Also :

त्वया कृतानि तंलाणि जवोद्धारणहेतवे ।  
विनाहागममार्गेण कलौ नास्ति गतिः प्रिये ॥  
भुति स्मृति पुराणादौ मयैवोक्तं पुरा शिवे ।  
आगमोक्तविधानेन कलौ देवान्ज्येष्ठसुधीः ॥  
(महानिर्वाणतंत्र )

5. शब्द ब्रह्म स्वरूपं च मम वक्त्राद्विनिर्गतम् ।  
सन्देहो नैव कर्तव्यो यदि मुक्तिं समिच्छति ॥  
सन्देहात् परमं याति रौरवं पितृभिः सह ।  
सर्वं कार्येषु सर्वत्र तादृके वैदिके तथा ॥  
अविश्वासो महान् दोषो यन्नतस्तद्विचर्जयेत् ।  
(प्राणतोषिणी-गंधर्व तंत्र २ पटल)

feel abundantly impressed with the high degree of creative and analytical mind which the early author or authors displayed in evolving a theory, which was as unique in its depth and subtlety of metaphysical conception as it was at the same time grand in its achievements in the field of Natural Science. We can, therefore, without fear of contradiction say that they were, as the readers will presently see, the pioneers of a new thought in making religion not only a matter of spiritual and psychological interest, but also a sub-

ject embracing ever so many practical departments of knowledge which could even today prove of infinite value to the world at large. They were the people who, for the first time, lifted the veil of mysticism which shrouded the formula of letters, syllables, and words (Mantras). Besides, it is said that the Ayurveda (Indian Medical Science) owes its "Rasa-Chikitsa" (inorganic therapeutics) to the Tantra Sastra. As to medical herbs, there are many which are supposed to have been borrowed from Tantric pharmacopaeas.

*(To be continued)*

## A CENTRE OF HARIJAN UPLIFT

*By a Sevaka*

**K**ERALA, the birth-place of Sri Sankara, may well be proud of the high level of Sanskrit culture among both sexes of the upper classes, non-Brahmin as well as Brahmin, but every son and daughter of the land has to be ashamed of the fact that it has become the hotbed of such practices as untouchability, unapproachability and even unseeability, which are annually driving thousands out of the Hindu fold. These evils were clearly discerned by the Swami Vivekananda during his tour as a Parivrajaka nearly half a century back. And he must have had them in mind when, years afterwards, on his return from America he declaimed before the Hindu public: "No religion on earth preaches the dignity of humanity in such lofty strain as Hinduism, and no religion on earth treads upon the necks of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism.....They pay for our education, they build our temples, but in return get kicks. If we

want to regenerate India, we must work for them." According to the Swami, we are now neither Vedantists, nor Pouraniks nor Tantriks: we are just "Don't-touchists." Our religion is the kitchen; our God is the cooking pot and our creed is "Don't touch me. I am holy." If this went on for another century, Swamiji was sure that every one of us would be in a lunatic asylum.

But evidently our nation cannot, in the economy of Providence, afford to die succumbing to these evils. Time and again under the inspiration of her saints, heroes and divine incarnations, she has shown a wonderful genius for universal absorption and spiritual synthesis. The play of this infinite power for assimilating and unifying warring creeds, cultures and communities is again in demand today to save India and the world alike from imminent danger. Nor has the call failed to come—the call for a fresh synthesis of races and religions and for a fresh adjustment of the ancient, eternal Dharma

on lines suited to the needs of modern times. That it came from Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda is now a matter of history.

As a result of their forceful message, India has awakened from her deep, long sleep; and along with her awakening has come the movement for the emancipation of her dumb millions. They can no longer be kept down now, sunk in superstition, ignorance and misery. They must be allowed, as well as helped, to have their full share of the nation's heritage of material and spiritual wealth and to rise to the full height of their freedom and manhood. This does not demand, as is often mistaken, the total abolition of Varnashrama Dharma. On the contrary, as the Swami has observed, "From the highest man to the lowest Pariah, every one in this country has to try and become the ideal Brahmana .....the whole work is to raise the Chandala up to the level of the Brahmana—the Brahmana of spiritual culture and renunciation, the ideal type of humanity." This solution of the social problem consists not in pulling down the higher classes, but in raising the lower to the level of the higher.

## II

### *Gurukul and Vidya Mandir*

In response to the clarion call of Swami Vivekananda the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Trichur, has in all humility taken up the service of Daridra Narayana as a part of spiritual Sadhana. It was during the Flood Relief carried on in the Cochin State in 1924 under the guidance of Swami Atmaprakashananda of the Belur Math, that the Ashrama workers first came into close contact with the poor untouchables and realised their horrid plight. As the need for a more permanent form of service had become

abundantly clear, the Ashrama opened in 1927, The Sri Ramakrishna Gurukul and Vidya Mandir in a suburban village four miles to the west of Trichur town, near the main road to the famous Guruvayur temple. The village has a good number of Harijan inhabitants and stands in sore need of devoted service and uplift work.

### *Present Strength.*

The Gurukul is the residential section, and the Vidya Mandir the day school. Instruction is imparted free and covers the primary and secondary grades. The institutions are intended mainly for Harijans. But higher caste pupils are also freely admitted, and even encouraged to join, so as to give the children of the Harijans the benefit of equal association and comradeship with the children of the higher castes. There are at present 277 pupils on the rolls of the Vidya Mandir, of whom 162 are Harijans. 26 boys now live in the Gurukul, ranging from 10 to 16 years of age. All are free boarders; 18 of them are Harijans and 8 belong to the higher castes. The boys live under the supervision of 10 teachers residing in the Gurukul, all belonging to the higher castes. Two of them are Masters of Art, one a Graduate and the rest Intermediates and Matriculates and qualified teachers.

### *Life in the Gurukul*

The day begins at 4-30 A. M. in the Gurukul, with devotional songs and prayer after a cold plunge bath in the Ashrama *Theertha*. Then follow the recital of the Gita, Sandhya and Surya Namaskar. The boys afterwards attend to their domestic work and home studies and are served with breakfast at 8. The school session begins at 9 and after three hours' work breaks up for meals at 12 noon. The afternoon session begins at 1-30 and extends up

to 4-30 P.M. After the dispersal of the school, the boys of the Gurukul divide themselves into two batches, one going out to play and the other attending to garden work alternately. Evening Sandhya and Bhajana are conducted between 6-30 and 7-30 P. M., after which meals are served. The boys gather at 8-30 to attend the Children's Republican Court which is presided over by a tribunal of three judges elected from among themselves. Here all complaints preferred by boys against their mates are heard and disposed of with the help of their own advocates. There is also a juvenile police force to investigate complaints and prosecute delinquents. This is designed to give the boys practical training in citizenship and self-government. Appeals against the decrees of the Court are however heard and disposed of by the teacher in charge, who has also to approve all verdicts and punishments before they are executed. After the court, the daily papers are read. The boys are also regaled with stories till 9-30 P. M., when they retire for sleep.

#### *Manual Work*

All work in the Gurukul like cleaning, cooking, washing, gardening and tending the cows is attended to by the boys themselves under the guidance of the teachers. Even in the erection of buildings and putting up of walls and fences, the practice is to entrust the boys with the major part of the labour. The boys also make their own furniture and weave and wash their own clothes. Hired labour is engaged only in cases of absolute necessity, where expert skill is wanted. This enables the boys to get practical training in these arts and crafts. They learn to love labour and feel its dignity. Besides, there is the joy and the satisfaction of creative effort which takes

away much of the ordinary feelings of drudgery. Above all, this provides the most effective safeguard against the danger of the Harijan boys getting away with the idea that, by mere schooling they have risen above the level of their labouring brethren at home or in the field, or that their new-found freedom from social tyranny has brought with it a corresponding freedom from honest work.

#### *Culture of the Head and Heart*

In thus laying special emphasis on manual labour, there is no minimising of the importance of general intellectual training for Harijans. A special curriculum has been devised so as to enable the boys to cover also the ordinary secondary school course and appear for the public examinations. Nor is the culture of the heart neglected. The boys are encouraged to observe and appreciate the beauties of nature and give free expression to their emotions through pictures and poems. Training in other fine arts such as music and folk-dance are also given their proper place in the curriculum.

#### *General Education*

Particular attention is paid to the culture of the mother-tongue, viz., Malayalam. A high level of proficiency is aimed at and special textbooks have been prepared to suit the purpose. Sanskrit is taught compulsorily to all boys as the language of ancient Hindu culture and religion. A working knowledge of Hindi is also imparted to all the boys as it is the common language of the nation. Instruction in English is given in the higher classes and the standard aimed at is sufficient to meet the requirements of the public examinations. The teaching of History, Geography and Civics is done in a manner calculated to cultivate in the boys love of the

motherland and our ancient culture. There are at present 6 standards in the Vidya Mandir, but additional forms are opened every year and it is the intention of the Ashrama to raise the institution to the status of a full-fledged High School.

#### *Religious Instruction*

Religious instruction is a special feature of the institution. Work in the Vidya Mandir begins and ends with prayer. Every day half an hour is set apart for regular religious classes. Regular Puja and religious practices such as Sandhya, Surya Namaskar and Swadhyaya are part of the daily routine in the Gurukul. The birthdays of great prophets and saints belonging to the different religions are also celebrated. Every attempt is made to impress upon the boys the unity of all religions and remove from their minds narrow, sectarian prejudices. The birthday festivity of Sri Ramakrishna is specially marked by Bhajana, processions, poor feeding, public meeting and drama. The celebration attracts a large number of villagers belonging to all castes and creeds. On this occasion all ideas of high and low vanish, the 'touchables' freely mix with the 'untouchables' and an atmosphere of spiritual kinship prevails.

#### *Industrial and Agricultural Education*

But with the ignorant and poverty-stricken masses, the problem of bread-winning inevitably precedes that of culture. Care is therefore taken to emphasise the earning value of education by starting an industrial school for vocational instruction. Here regular training is given in hand-spinning, weaving, carpentry and mat-making. As already referred to, the boys are also given training in such useful work as masonry, thatching, fencing, laundry and needle-work. The absence of a

a well equipped work-shop is acting as a great handicap. The agricultural section gives practical training to the boys in agriculture, gardening, dairying, bee-culture and other farm work. There is also a small provision store for selling necessities at cheap rates to the villagers. Here the Gurukul boys receive practical training in shop-keeping and accounts.

#### *The Tuskegee Spirit*

In framing this curriculum and scheme of uplift the Ashrama has largely drawn upon the valuable experiences of the American Negro pioneer, Booker T. Washington, the founder of the famous Tuskegee Institute. This institute teaches students to lift labour out of drudgery, and to place it on a plane where it would become attractive, where it would be something to be sought, rather than to be dreaded and if possible to be avoided. The Sri Ramakrishna Gurukul and Vidya Mandir strive, in all humility, to do for the Harijans what Tuskegee has done and is doing for the Negroes of America. They however, bear in mind the important distinction that, unlike the Negroes, the Harijans are not a separate race, but part and parcel, an organic limb, of the Hindu society and that, therefore, their future depends on their complete assimilation in the Hindu fold.

#### *Some Difficulties*

This account will be incomplete without a brief reference to the numerous obstacles in the way of our unfortunate brethren fully availing themselves of the facilities provided for their benefit. To be indifferent to one's own welfare is one of the worst effects of prolonged slavery. This is true of Harijans as of no other community. It requires not a little effort to make them realise the value of education and to secure regular attendance of

their boys at school. It is therefore doubly pitiable to see some of those who are willing to send their children to school prevented from doing so by their social and economic handicaps. The adults in the family have to be daily working in the fields from morn till eve, and children of school-going age are often the only ones left to look after the baby at home. Often the landlords, on whose plots the poor Pulaya has put up his hovel, also add their domineering voice, sometimes with threats of eviction, to dissuade the parents from sending their children to school. Cases are not also rare of poor parents being forced even to pledge their children as security for loans taken from money-lending landlords, for whom the boys have to work under conditions bordering on slavery. Needless to say that such boys cannot have any chance of freely attending schools. Another difficulty arises from the fact that Harijan huts are situated in out of the way quarters, which makes it very hard for the children to go to school through circuitous and often thorny fields and foot-paths. Interested parties are also responsible for creating in the credulous minds of the Harijans the strange delusion that school-going is simply a prelude to recruitment in the army. Some at least of these difficulties could possibly be removed by opening a free colony for Harijans where they could live unmolested, easily accessible to progressive influences. The Ashrama has in view the opening of such a colony and is in quest of some suitable plots for the purpose.

#### *Adult Education*

Education of the children of the suppressed classes cannot progress without a parallel programme of a well-planned adult education. But the difficulties in the way of educating the elders are

only greater than those in the case of the children. During the day-time they have to work for their living and after hard toil they find it difficult to begin intellectual work at night. The toddy shop too acts as a strong temptation to lure them away from the classes. Unless one can provide attractions and utilities sufficient to rouse and keep up the interest of the elders, no work among them can succeed. The Ashrama people hope to succeed better if they can provide themselves with a gramophone or a radio set and a magic lantern with suitable slides.

#### *Medical Relief and other Departments*

An attempt was made to start a Co-operative Society for the elders but it had to be abandoned soon. A Students' Co-operative store has instead been opened to supply school requisites. This and the provision stores run by the boys themselves give them a good training in co-operative business and rudiments of commerce. One of the teachers in the Gurukul has some experience in the practice of the various branches of Ayurveda. Owing to lack of funds, the Ashrama has to content itself with supplying mere prescriptions in most cases. A few medicines have of course been stocked for emergent cases like snake-bite. There is at present a monthly average attendance of 1000 patients belonging to all classes and creeds. Cases are not rare where patients have to be kept in the school itself for days together for proper nursing and treatment. The need for an inpatient ward is thus keenly felt.

#### *Pressing Needs*

The school is now housed in a thatched shed which has also to provide accommodation for the residence of the Gurukul boys and workers. The industrial section and the stores are also located there. This over-crowding

causes great inconvenience. There are no retiring rooms for workers and visitors when the classes are in full swing. There is not enough space even for the classes. Without more funds additional accommodation is impossible. Funds are required also for meeting the recurring expenses to maintain the resident scholars and workers in the Gurukul, which now comes to nearly Rs. 400 per month.

It is not yet time to measure the success of the Ashrama's endeavours which cover a wide field of rural reconstruction and social service. The problem of untouchability is not going to be solved without intensive constructive work from *within*. It was the

Swami Vivekananda's firm conviction that liberation could be brought about not so much by reform as by *growth from within*. "I do not believe in reform," he says, "I believe in growth. I do not dare to put myself in the position of God and dictate to our society, 'This way thou shouldst move and not that.' My idea is growth, expansion, development on national lines." It is in this spirit that the Ashrama strives to work and play its humble part in the building up of awakened India. May success attend its work! And may many more institutions of a similar kind spring up to carry the message of love and strength throughout the land!

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

(Continued from page 318)

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

From the point of view of Atman, (the phenomenal world) is not separate from (Atman). From its own point of view, it is not different from (or independent of) Atman. Knowers of Tattva (Reality) know it as neither separate from nor non-separate from (Atman). (34)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

Why is the non-dual spoken of as auspicious? When on account of difference, one object is distinguished from another, inauspiciousness may arise. When the phenomenal and Samsaric world is looked at from the point of view of the real and non-dual Atman, it does not exist in the form of a variety of objects different from one

another. When the rope is examined in proper light, there is no snake different from it. Similarly, Prana and other things do not exist in their own form (in Atman), for they are all superimpositions. Prana and the like substances are not things really different, one from another, as a horse is different from a buffalo. (In ordinary Vyavahara, we believe that a horse is different from a buffalo and also that there is no snake independent of a rope. As all are superimpositions on Atman, they are not different, one from the others, nor are they independent of Atman). As they are unreal, they are not independent of Atman and do not differ from each other or from Atman. Brahmanas (knowers of Brahman) thus realise

Atman as the only true Reality. Therefore it is settled that non-duality alone is auspicious, as there is no duality which is the cause of inauspiciousness.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

The non-dual (Atman) free from superimpositions and without the phenomenal world, has been realised by the sages who are devoid of attachment, fear and anger and well-versed in the final conclusions of the Vedas. (35)

*Sankara's Commentary*

This superior knowledge is extolled here. Sages are those wise people who are free from all evils such as attachment, fear, anger, &c., who are acquainted with the conclusions of the Vedas and who are ever engaged in study and contemplation. Such sages alone are able to realise Atman, who is devoid of all superimposed objects and who is non-dual on account of the absence of the world, in which are extended a vast variety of objects. The non-dual Atman can be realised only by such Sannyasins who have renounced all evils and whose minds are ever set in the conclusions of Vedanta, and not by those whose minds are agitated by attachment and other evils, and not by logicians (such as Vaisesikas) with the aid of Sastras made by themselves to suit their own creeds.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

Having thus realised (Atman) one must ever be mindful of non-duality. After realising non-duality, one may be engaged in worldly concerns like an ordinary (unenlightened) man. (36)

*Sankara's Commentary*

As it is able to destroy all evils, non-duality is auspicious and fearless.

Therefore one must always bear in mind such non-duality; that is to say, one must be always engaged in the contemplation of non-duality. After understanding what non-duality is and realising "I am Parabrahman", transcending all wants such as hunger, &c., and knowing that the directly experienced unborn Atman transcends all worldly concerns, one may take part in worldly affairs like any ordinary person (that is, not feeling himself superior to others). That is to say, one must not proclaim (or show) himself to be a knower of Atman (and consequently superior to others). (He must behave in such a way that he does not see any being second to himself. This is the true test of his having realised Brahman).

*Gaudapada's Karika*

Yati (the renouncer) should be above praise, above (the formalities of) salutation and above the use of the Svadha—(this word is used in the performance of rituals done annually in memory of departed ancestors). He should find his abode in the movable and the immovable and conduct himself in the world according to (prevailing) circumstances. (37)

*Sankara's Commentary*

As to how a Yati should behave in this world is now stated. He should give up all conventional actions such as praising and saluting, and be like a Sannyasin (who is not bound by any rules and ordinances). The authority (for this course of action) is Brih. Up., "Knowing that Atman alone &c." and Gita (V-17) "Thinking on That, merged in That, established in That, and solely devoted to That, &c." 'The movable' is the body, as it is changing every moment. 'The immovable' is the

Reality, that is Atman. The Atman-Reality which is immovable like Akasa (space or ether) is his real abode but when he occasionally forgets it while taking food (and doing such other actions) and attaches himself to the body, then that body becomes his temporary abode. This is what is meant by the movable and immovable being the abode of the knower (of Atman), and not that he is in relation to any external abode (such as house or monastery &c.). What is meant by his having to adapt himself to circumstances, is that he must be satisfied with a piece of loin-cloth or a morsel of food just enough to keep up his bodily condition.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Having realised the internal essence (Atman), having understood the nature of external (objects), identifying himself with the Reality and enjoying the bliss thereof, he should never slide down from the Reality. (38)

### *Sankara's commentary*

The external consists of the earth, &c. The internal refers to the body, &c. The truth about these is that like the rope-snake, &c., or like objects seen in a dream, or like objects created by a magician, they are all unreal: The text from Ch. Up. supports this: "The (phenomenal) modifications are mere

names, expressed in words." But the Atman exists outside and inside, is unborn, beginningless, undivided, has no within or without, is full, all-pervading like Akasa (space), subtle, immovable, without attributes, without parts, actionless, as supported by the Sruti (Ch. Up.): "That is the truth; that is Atman; that thou art." Knowing the truth, realising the Atman and enjoying the bliss of (Atman), one does not care for external objects. But one who does not know the truth about Atman, may take mind itself to be Atman, may think that he is active when the mind is active, may think that he has become the body, &c., by forgetting the truth, may think that at one time he ceases to be Tattva (Reality) when the mind wanders, may think at another time that by a concentration of mind he attains to the state of Samadhi and becomes one with it (mind); and may think of Tattva (Reality) in any manner he pleases. The knower of Atman is always one and changeless and never changes his essential nature. The knower of Brahman realising "I am Brahman" should never swerve from that state. That is to say, he must always feel that he is Brahman who has no rise or fall. The following Gita texts support this: (The wise look with an equal eye) "on a dog and outcaste" (V-18) and "seated equally in all beings" (XIII-27).

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE BHAGAVAD GITA:** *By Annie Besant. Published by Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Price 4 annas.*

This is the ninth edition of Mrs. Besant's translation of the Gita. The Sanskrit text is printed in beautiful Devanagari characters. The neat get-up, the convenient size and the low

price are its attractive features. The fact that the second and third editions brought out 20,000 and 50,000 copies respectively reveals the extraordinary popularity of the volume.

**THE HEART OF HINDUSTAN:** *By Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. Published by Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pages 151. Price Rs. 1.*

This volume contains, besides a clear and lucid exposition of the Hindu Dharma and the Hindu Idea of God, a review of Indian Philosophy with special emphasis on the unity of the various systems, and on the problem of future development. The chapters on "Buddhism," "Islam and Indian

Thought," and "Hindu Thought and Christian Doctrine" are admirable helps to make comparative studies, very much needed at the present day. The popularity of the book is shown by the fact that the first edition ran out of stock within sixteen months of the publication.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### The Vedanta Society of New York

At a general meeting of the Society held on September 30th, Swami Bodhananda intimated his desire to retire from active service. He has appointed Swami Nikhilananda to succeed him as the spiritual head of the Society.

The Vedanta Society of New York was founded by the illustrious Swami Vivekananda in 1894, after his monumental exposition of the Hindu Philosophy and Religion at the Parliament of Religions, held at Chicago in 1893. Swami Abhedananda carried on the work of the Society for fifteen years, from 1897 to 1912, preaching with great ability and scholarship the principles of Vedanta in this the biggest and most important city of the United States. Swami Bodhananda went to New York in 1906 as the assistant of Swami Abhedananda and himself conducted the work of the Society during the latter's absence in India. After Swami Abhedananda's return to America, Swami Bodhananda became the leader of the Vedanta Society of Pittsburgh, where he remained for a period of six years. In 1912 he was invited to New York to take the complete charge of the Society and since that time he has been acting as the spiritual head of the Society with single-minded devotion and sincerity of purpose. His fearless exposition of truth, his simplicity of life and his unassuming manners have made an indelible impression upon all that came in contact with him. His deep scholarship, his simple way of explaining abstruse principles of the Vedanta and his unusual keenness in understanding the inner

psychology of the student's mind, have been instrumental in gathering many an adherent of Vedanta in this city.

The present headquarters of the Society was established in a large private residence in 1921 through the generous gift of a devoted pupil and friend of Swami Bodhananda, the late Miss Mary Morton.

Swami Nikhilananda, who is now the minister-in-charge of the Society, went to America a year ago and worked in Providence, Rhode Island, as the assistant of Swami Akhilananda. He has opened the season's work in New York on Sunday, October 2nd, with a sermon on "The Essentials and Non-essentials of Religion". Besides the usual Sunday services, the new Swami is conducting two classes every week, on Srimad Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads.

### R. K. Mission Work in Sind

In response to repeated requests from local sympathisers of the Mission, Swami Vishwananda of Bombay Ashrama paid a visit to Karachi in September last. He delivered a series of lectures and met some prominent citizens interested in educational and cultural advancement. Spade work had already been done by his first lecture tour in 1928 and the Flood Relief work in 1930. The response on this occasion was, therefore, greater, as could well be seen from the pressing requests that were made to the Swamiji to open an Ashrama there. Financial help has been assured, and the Swamiji has in his turn, promised that he would put their request before the Governing Body of the Mission. On his way back the

Swamiji halted for a day at Hyderabad, Sind, another of the cultural centres of the locality.

### R. K. M. Industrial School and Home, Belur

This institution has now completed the eleventh year of its career. Owing to the expansion of the work it has been converted into a branch centre of the Mission with a local Committee to look after its management. Great difficulty is being experienced to provide adequate hostel accommodation, the thatched sheds temporarily put up being totally unsatisfactory. The number on the rolls at the end of the year was 30. Six appeared for the final examination of the school and came out successful. All the household work is entirely in the hands of the students who are assisted and supervised by a Warden, who is a Sannyasin of the Belur Math. The spiritual atmosphere of the Belur Math, the various facilities provided by it, the weekly classes, etc., infuse a healthy religious spirit into the young minds. (1) Cabinet-making, (2) Weaving, dyeing and calico-printing and (3) Tailoring are the three courses prescribed and there is a proposal to start a fourth, *viz.*, Agriculture. With the support of the public the management hopes to remove some of the pressing needs, *e.g.*, a gymnasium, a Segregation Ward and a hostel for 50 boarders, as well as to secure funds enough to place the work on a sound financial footing.

### R. K. M. Students' Home, Calcutta

This Students' Home has now been in existence for thirteen years. Through a deed of gift it has now come in possession of a small two-storied house, which will be used as its Calcutta

office when the Home will be shifted to its own land in Gowripore. That land was further developed during the course of the year, a bathing-ghat constructed and the foundation laid for a Dormitory to accommodate 12 students. Two more Dormitories, a kitchen, stores, etc., have to be erected before the shifting can be made. The authorities trust that the public will contribute generously the sum of about Rs. 15,000 necessary for this work. At the end of the year there were 23 students on the rolls, of whom 17 were free, 5 concession-holders and 1 paying. Nine sat for the different University Examinations, and seven came out successful, one standing first in the first class in Philosophy M.A. The total receipts came to Rs. 17,030-8-11, and the expenses to Rs. 13,398-1-0. It is interesting to note that the sale proceeds from the dairy and farm amounted to Rs. 1,875 as against Rs. 898-9-3 in the previous year. This section has become almost self-supporting, the cost of fodder being appreciably reduced by the cultivation of the different kinds of grass.

### R. K. Sevashrama, Shyamala Tal

This institution has been ministering to the needs of the poor inhabitants of the Himalayan jungles for the past seventeen years. Owing to economic depression and the failure to get the usual gift of free medicines, the work has been very much hampered and the stock of medicines, etc., almost exhausted. To replenish this, as well as to repay a loan taken to complete the Sevashrama building, the modest sum of Rs. 700 is necessary, and the management hopes the public will generously contribute this sum. Out of the 1701 outdoor cases, 92 were cattle. The number of indoor patients was 14.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XIX]

MARCH, 1933

[No. 11

## HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

प्रभवार्थाय भूतानां धर्मप्रवचनं कृतम् ।

यः स्यात् प्रभवसंयुक्तः स धर्म इति निश्चयः ॥

अहिंसार्थाय भूतानां धर्मप्रवचनं कृतम् ।

यः स्यादहिंसया युक्तः स धर्म इति निश्चयः ॥

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधं आतृशंस्यं दमस्तथा ।

आर्जवश्चैव राजेन्द्र निश्चितं धर्मलक्षणम् ॥

इज्याध्ययनदानानि तपः सत्यं क्षमा दमः ।

अलोभ इति मार्गोऽयं धर्मस्थाविविधः स्मृतः ॥

Dharma has been propounded for the purpose of promoting the welfare of all beings. That which is associated with welfare is surely Dharma.

This Dharma has been preached for the sake of preventing beings from doing harm to one another. That which is associated with harmlessness is certainly Dharma.

Non-injury, truthfulness, absence of anger, absence of cruelty ; self-control and straightforwardness, O Monarch, constitute the fixed definition of Dharma.

Sacrifice, study, offering of gifts, austerity, truthfulness, forbearance, self-control, absence of greediness—this is the eight-fold path of Dharma.

MAHABHARATA

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

*(Continued from page 364)*

### *The Master's Devotion to Truth.*

#### *Third Instance*

**T**HE Master used to designate the late Shambhu Chandra Mallik Mahashaya of Calcutta, who was well known for his riches and bountiful nature, as the second of his four provision-suppliers. He owned a garden near the Kali Temple of Rani Rasmoni. He used to spend much of his time there in discussing religious matters with the Master. He founded also a charitable dispensary there. One day he came to know about the stomach-trouble of Sri Ramakrishna Deva which had grown almost chronic. He advised the Master to use a little opium and take it from him when he would return to Rasmoni's garden. The Master also consented to do so. But in the course of conversation the thought about opium escaped the memory of both of them.

When he had parted from Shambhu Babu and was well on his way to Dakshineswar, the Master happened to remember the former's advice. He came back to ask for the opium but found that Shambhu Babu had repaired to the inner apartments. He did not like to send for him for that trifling thing. So he begged a little opium from the clerks and wended his way back to

Rasmoni's garden. But coming a little way off, he felt a sort of benumbing sensation and the path ahead became invisible. His legs were being dragged, as it were, by some force towards the drain-water by the road-side. The Master thus mused within himself, "What is this? This is not the path!" And he could not ascertain the proper direction of the road. With considerable difficulty he came to understand that he got somehow bewildered as to the right way to take. So he turned his gaze towards the garden of Shambhu Babu and found that the road in that direction was clearly visible. After much deliberation he retraced his steps back to the gate of Shambhu Babu's garden, observed minutely the way leading towards the garden of Rani Rasmoni and began to walk on with much caution. But as soon as he advanced a step or two the same crisis recurred as before. He could not find out the path. His legs were being dragged, as it were, in the opposite direction. As it happened thus repeatedly, the following thought flashed in the mind of the Master, "O, I remember Shambhu told me, 'Ask for opium from me.' But I have not acted accordingly. Because I have got the opium from

his *clerks* without letting him know about it, the Mother does not allow me to go forward ! The clerks are not entitled to give anything without the permission of Shambhu. And I ought to have taken it from him in accordance with his direction. Otherwise the way in which I am taking the opium indicates twofold crimes in the form of stealing and telling a lie. It is for this reason that the Mother is putting me to this difficulty and does not allow me to go back." Thinking thus he came back to Shambhu Babu's dispensary but could not find the clerk there as he had gone somewhere else to take food. So he threw the packet of opium into the room through the window and shouted out, "O, sir, I am leaving your opium here." So saying he went back to the garden of Rasmoni. This time he did not feel any such reeling sensation as before. The road was clearly visible and he went off easily. The Master used to say, "As I entrusted myself fully unto the Mother, She has taken charge of me and would not allow me to go astray under any circumstance whatever." A good many instances of similar nature have we come across in the life of the Master. How wonderful it is ! Can we imagine even a bit of such truthfulness and complete self-resignation ? It is that type of reliance regarding which the Master often used to tell us thus in a metaphorical way: "Well, in that locality (referring to his own birthplace, Kamarpukur) there are pathways over

the embankments in the fields through which all the people travel from one village to another. As the tracks are narrow the father takes the little child in his arms lest it should tumble down if allowed to walk on foot. The elder boy, being a bit clever, takes hold of his father's hand and walks on. On the way they may catch sight of a kite or something else, and the children are likely to clap their hands out of joy. The child that is carried in the arms knows that it is held by the father and so goes on clapping merrily without any fear. But the other boy, who himself holds the father, may forget the narrow path and let go his hold. He will then immediately fall down with a thud and burst out crying. Thus he who is held by the Mother has no fear any more while he who himself holds the Mother has danger still. For if he leaves the hold, he will have a fall."

*Obstacles for Sri Ramakrishna on his way to the Nirvikalpa State*

Thus, on account of the intensity of his devotion to God, Sri Ramakrishna had no special attraction for any object whatsoever of the world. No mundane desire of any kind therefore stood in the way of his attaining the Nirvikalpa (Non-duality) state. The only object that obstructed him was the form of the Divine Mother—the image of supreme beauty—which he was so long worshipping with loving devotion and to which he was accustomed to attach the greatest

importance as the one object leading to the highest good in life. He used to describe this impasse:—  
 “No sooner did I gather my mind together than there stood in front the form of the Mother. Now the mind would not like to proceed any farther leaving Her behind. Every time I tried to discard all thoughts from the mind and keep it perfectly free, the same thing happened. At last after long deliberation I gathered much strength of mind, and with knowledge symbolised as a sword I cut the image in two mentally. After this nothing else lingered in the mind. It ran straight to the Nirvikalpa state.”

For us the above description is only so many words without any meaning, as we have never sincerely considered any form of the Mother as our own or learnt to love any of them with our heart and soul. We have intense love in the core of our heart for the mind and the lump of flesh called the body. Hence the thought of death or any sudden and thorough change in the mind frightens us immensely. With Sri Ramakrishna however it was quite different. He knew in the very depth of his being that the lotus feet of the Mother alone constitute the highest good in life, and he therefore spent his whole time in meditating on or in serving Her image divine. Hence, once the form was somehow removed, what else on earth was left for the mind to cling to? And as soon as all the mental waves were stilled and the mind was freed from every kind of bondage, the latter

rested directly in the Nirvikalpa state. Our readers should try to conceive this grand picture through imagination, though they may not fully understand it. Then only will they come to know how Sri Ramakrishna made the Mother his own and what a whole-hearted devotion he had for Her.

*Staying for Six Months in a State in which stay for only Twenty One Days Destroys the Body*

Sri Ramakrishna was in this Nirvikalpa state for full six months almost without a break. “I was,” he used to say, “for six months in that state from which ordinary mortals cannot return. After twenty one days the body drops off like a withered leaf. Days and nights succeeded each other perfectly unnoticed. Flies would enter the mouth and the nostrils just as in the case of a corpse without producing any sensation. Hairs became all matted with dust. Sometimes even nature’s calls were answered unawares. Hardly could the body survive this state but for a Sadhu who happened to come at this time. He at once recognised my condition, and also understood that the Mother has yet to do many things through this body—that many persons would be benefited if it were preserved. So at meal time he used to fetch some food and try to bring me to external consciousness by administering a good beating to the body. As soon as traces of consciousness were perceived he would thrust the food into the mouth. In this way a few

morsels would be swallowed on some days; on other days, not even that. Full six months were thus passed. Later, after some days' stay in this state I came to hear the Mother's command—'Remain on the threshold of relative consciousness (Bhavamukha) for the instruction of mankind.' Then appeared blood dysentery. There was acute writhing pain in the intestines. Through this suffering for six months the normal body consciousness slowly re-appeared. Or else, every now and then the mind would, of its own accord, soar to the Nirvikalpa state."

In fact we have heard from persons who were fortunate enough to meet him even ten or twelve years before his passing away, that even

then they could very rarely hear him talk. The state of ecstasy used to persist for almost all the twenty four hours of the day. Talking was out of the question! We have heard from Sriji Vishwanath Upadhyaya, an officer of the Nepal State, whom Sri Ramakrishna used to address as 'Captain,' that he saw him remaining merged in Samadhi for three consecutive days and nights without interruption. He said also that Sri Ramakrishna's body had to be massaged with cow's butter from the neck to the end of the spinal column and from the thighs to the feet in order to make it possible for the mind to come down from that high state of Samadhi to the level of 'me' and 'mine'.

## FAITH IN THE CRUCIBLE

Give below an extract from the "Madras Mail" which gives some shocking information regarding the state of religion in Soviet Russia: "There are strong indications that a new systematic attack on religion is being launched by the Soviet Government, writes a special correspondent to the *Morning Post*. This new attack takes the form of a Five Year Plan of Atheism. And as for its object, it is the complete suppression of all religious teachings and cults, regardless of their attitude to the Government by May 1st, 1937.

"This plan has been discussed at great length by the 'Anti-God' Press, and there are good reasons to believe that it has actually been embodied in a decree on May 15th by the Sovnarkom

(Council of People's Commissars). This decree, however, has not been published, though it has been sent to all the regional party committees.

"The decree which has been signed by Stalin, Bekhteroff, Yaroslavsky, Kogan, Labotchevsky and Petru-shilli, contains 118 articles which are grouped under five headings (corresponding to the five years of the Plan). The final aim of the decree is expressed in the following terms: 'On May 1st, 1937, there must not remain in the territory of the U. S. S. R. a single house of prayer to God, and the very conception of God will be banished from the boundaries of the Soviet Union as a survival of the Middle Ages which served as an instrument for the oppression of the working masses.'

"In the first year it is proposed to suppress all religious schools and to deprive all the 'servitors of religious cults' of their allowances of food and the necessities of life. Such 'servitors of the cults' as will not abandon their function by May 1st, 1935, will be compulsorily expelled from the U. S. S. R.

"It is not intended to close all the Churches and all the religious communities in the first year, but in the Capitals of the Soviet Union all Churches and prayer houses of all religious communities are to be closed by May 1st, 1934.

"The closing of the remaining Churches on the territory of U. S. S. R. is to be carried out according to a specially developed scheme.

"In the second year a 'shock campaign' will be launched against 'religious centres' in family life and the officially registered 'communes of the faithful' (the former monasteries). In October 1933, there will be a 'purge' of the 'religionists' (i. e. members of religious bodies) in all Soviet institutions.

"The printing of the religious books, journals, pamphlets and Service Books as well as the manufacture of Church utensils will be strictly prohibited. Special attention will be devoted to the inculcation of the principles of 'reasonable unbelief' among the masses and one of the main instruments for achieving this purpose will be the production of atheistic films. The production of no less than 150 such films is contemplated.

"The second half of the plan will be devoted to the consolidation of the results achieved, the 'activation of the anti-God units,' and to the conversion of the former Churches into clubs, picture-houses and other places of 'reasonable recreation.'"

Russia has recently brought the Five Year Plan for the economic development to a successful close. In India, as elsewhere, the plan has been widely acclaimed as epoch-making and received with admiration and approval. But that it should be followed by an anti-God campaign of a similar nature will be rather surprising to many. It was, however, well known to all that the attitude of Soviet Russia to religion was anything but friendly. Lenin pithily expressed the antipathy of Soviet Russia to religion when he said that 'religion is the opium of the people', and the Russian Government after the Revolution had accordingly given up the patronage of Christianity and adopted atheism as its official creed. Through academies having professors and publications financed by the State, through caricatures casting ridicule on things sacred to religion, and through all channels of publicity like the press and the platform which form an exclusive monopoly of the State in Russia, the Soviet Government had been trying to wean its subjects from the traditional beliefs of religion. Yet the Government had hitherto guaranteed freedom of belief and did not penalise people for their religious views. The preaching and practice of religion was allowed as long as it did not interfere with a person's loyalty to the State. The only restrictions were that religion should not be taught in schools and public institutions, and that the State's views on religion should not be criticised. But the anti God campaign mentioned above would deprive even the last vestige of liberty of conscience—liberty to believe and practise what is conducive to one's spiritual welfare without in the least tampering with the affairs of the State. It is admitted by all in these days that the State has a

right to interfere in social matters in order to help the weak or to check wide-spread social vices, but an interference like the one in question has gone beyond the limit of tolerance and cannot but be described as the most unparalleled instance of the State's tyranny.

Apart from condemning the attitude of the State in the matter, the question that comes to one's mind is why Bolshevik Russia should feel such antagonism to religion. That in these days there are free thinkers who attach no value to religion is quite well-known to all, but simple non-recognition of the value of religion cannot beget such hatred of it as the Bolsheviks are evincing. The explanation of their militant antagonism lies, we feel, in the previous history of religion in Russia. In the eye of the Bolsheviks, religion and the autocracy of the Tsars are identical and consequently they hate religion in the same way as they do the rule of the Tsars and the institutions connected with it. And if one makes a survey of the history of Christianity in Russia, one will find that there is ample justification for the hostility that the Bolsheviks are showing towards it; for in the Pre-Revolution Russia religion was the chief ally and tool of the Tsars in perpetuating their tyranny over Russia, in the first place by enslaving the national mind through the established Church and secondly by recruiting the forces of organised religion to suppress all movements for freedom both political and intellectual.

The masses of Russia were at a primitive level, both intellectually and morally, and it was only the tight bond of the bureaucracy, the most efficient instrument of Tsardom, that kept them restrained. The Tsars also attempted to regulate the force of national character by inculcating loyal-

ty to the State in the Russian mind. They however sought to do this, not through any system of national education or democratic political institutions, but through the orthodox Russian Church which they had made subservient to themselves. But the Greek Church, from the very time of its introduction into Russia from Byzantium, was only a set of old, spiritless forms and ceremonies, and was little fitted to exercise a regenerating influence on the national mind. And this uninspiring character of the Church increased when the State seized it for its own purpose of inculcating loyalty to Tsardom in the minds of the people. It was the reforms of Peter the Great that completed the work of reducing the organisation of the Church contributory to the absolutism of the Tsars. He abolished the Patriarchate and created in its place a Synod of Bishops for the administration of the Russian Church. The members of the Synod had to take an oath which ran, "I testify and swear that the monarch of all Russia is the supreme authority of this ecclesiastical committee." Thus the Tsar became the head of the Church, and to make his control effective he also introduced a lay agent of his as a member of the Synod.

When once the State had the Church under its grip, it began to make full use of the ecclesiastical organisation for giving a religious basis to the autocracy of the Tsars. The official programme of education, as announced by the Education Minister, Count Uvarov (1833-'49) had the triad of Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Patriotism for its watchwords, and till the end these continued to be the alpha and omega of official political wisdom. The Russian theocracy declared the Tsar's will a divine revelation, and deduced

the bureaucratic politics and administration from God's will thus revealed. The Russian Fundamental Law declared, "The Tsar of all Russia is an autocratic and absolute monarch. God Himself tells us to obey the Tsar's supreme authority, not from fear alone, but as a point of conscience." Under the influence of the State the Church inculcated the *fear* of God, conceiving Him as an anthropomorphic being whose likeness on earth was the Tsar. In the training colleges for cadets the priests were to suggest to their pupils that the greatness of Christ had been displayed above all in his submissiveness to the Government, in the way in which he had shown himself to be 'an example of obedience and discipline.' To the army recruits before whom lay a period of twenty five years of service, the Chaplains declared: "God chooses men for all professions as He wills. You are chosen and destined for the military career by the will of God—God wills that you shall serve God and the great Tsar as soldiers.....Before you were born it was God's determination that you should become warriors." Thus the Tsars tried in every way to utilise religion for inculcating loyalty to autocracy—a fact which justifies Lenin's remark that 'religion is the opium of the people,' at least with reference to the kind of religion that prevailed in Russia under the auspices of the Tsars.

The close alliance between the State and the Church had a still worse result than the prostitution of the latter for the enslavement of the Russian mind. In the eye of the Church-State non-conformity was tantamount to treason and consequently up to the end of the Tsarist regime barbarous religious persecutions were quite common in Russia whenever any section of people showed a tendency to follow their

conscience. Since the Church was the only institution of the Russian State for the political education of the people it was in the interest of the latter to see that the whole of Russia came under the sway of the Church. For thereby the autocracy could impose its political doctrines on the people and effectively check the growth of ideas hostile to its interests. Therefore in course of time the Holy Synod, the highest ecclesiastical body in Russia, became more of a department of Police than a channel of Divine Grace. The members were appointed not for their learning and piety but for their loyalty to the political ideals of the Tsardom. Its one aim was to see that the whole of Russia was brought within the orthodox Church with the assistance of the secular powers of the State, if necessary. "Misbelief in church dogmas, especially when accompanied, as in the rationalistic sects, by a critical attitude of mind towards all institutions and traditions, is, it was argued, hardly to be distinguished from disloyalty to the Tsar." Hence the Tsar's officers at the head of religious affairs did not make any distinction between dissenters and traitors, and hence the most horrible forms of persecution, as in the Middle Ages, were inflicted on people for their religious beliefs even in the 19th and 20th centuries. A few examples of such persecution may not be out of place here. The Stundists, a sect of Russian dissenters, who were withal loyal to the State, paid the taxes regularly, served in the army and lived clean lives, were characterised by the Synod as 'uncommonly pernicious ecclesiastically and politically, and accordingly persecuted with utmost severity. These sectarians, we read, "are not only persecuted, but are hounded down after the fashion of the Middle Ages. Banishment to Siberia and

Transcaucasia, confinement in monastic prisons, scourging with Cossack whips, military repressions, arbitrary injustices like removal of children.....from their parents' custody, frequent lynching of sectarians by artificially incited masses—these are a few of the facts which outline the legal status or rather the outlawing of religious dissenters." (*Russika Vedomosti*). Similar too was the fate of the Old Believers, another dissenting sect, who differed from the Orthodox Church on some points of secondary importance. To suppress them the Church forbade their marriage in their own community, and in the case of those who went against the prohibition a decree was passed declaring their children bastards and their wives concubines. They were devoid of the right of bringing up a family, debarred from public services and disqualified from praying in public. The arbitrariness and intolerance of the Holy Synod was so great that a respectable priest of the Orthodox Church, Tsvetkoff by name, was most severely punished for simply holding the opinion that the Church and the State should be separated. He was interned in the dungeons of the monastic prison of Suzdal for two years without trial until out of despair and misery he almost starved himself to death.

When viewed against this background of ecclesiastical tyranny, the reason for the hostility of the present regime in Russia to religion will be apparent. For the Russian intellectual the history of their country gave a glaring illustration of the Socialist maxim that religion is a device of vested interests for perpetuating their hold on the masses, and when power passed into their hands they treated the Church and religion, along with the other institutions of Tsardom, in the most ruthless manner. The number of

ecclesiastics executed between 1917 and 1920 was 8050 while an equally large number was sent into exile. The churches and monasteries were the special objects of Bolshevik persecution. Many of them were closed, others were turned into clubs, houses, etc., for workers, and still others were dismantled. The State also began an educational crusade against religion by ridiculing its conceptions and by an active propaganda in favour of atheism. The culmination of this propaganda has now been reached with the decision of the State to banish the idea of God from its sphere of influence.

In spite of all that one may say in defence or explanation of the conduct of the Bolshevik Government, no one can deny that this infringement on the liberty of the individual to believe and to worship is an unmitigated act of tyranny characteristic of the Bolshevik State no less than of the Tsarist Government. The faults of religion, as every one knows, are many. A formidable array of charges has been brought forward against it by many modern thinkers—charges of opposing the growth of science and knowledge, of fostering the spirit of war, of sanctioning and encouraging persecutions, of sacrificing the interests of the masses to those of the classes. A review of the history of religion will acquaint us with many facts that justify such charges with regard to different religions in varying degrees. But when we evaluate the worth of religion as a social institution we are to be guided not so much by the fact of these accidental features as by the question whether such aberrations are essential to it or not. We feel that most of the crimes attributed to religion are the result of the unholy alliance of secular interests with it, as in the example of pre-Revolution Russia. Is it not possible for religion to remain

aloof from the corrupting influence of foreign interests and perform its function in society with a certain degree of independence? Perhaps humanity has not yet achieved this task, and the increasing consciousness among men of the trespasses of religion in the past may perhaps work for a speedy realisation of this ideal in the future. The special function of religion lies in engendering a conviction in man that he is spirit and not merely a mass of matter, and in helping him to regulate life in such a way as will lead to the realisation of this fact in an increasing measure. In spite of all its misdeeds religion has been trying to do this work, in however imperfect a way it might be, and that is why a large portion of humanity still considers it essential for the well being of life. True it is that the faith of most of us requires to be exposed to and ventilated by the north-west wind of reason and science, but to discard religion as a whole as the Bolshevik Government have done will be like throwing away the baby with the bath.

Has this attitude of the Russian intellectuals towards religion got any lesson to teach us in India? We think it has. For are we not witnessing today in our own country how clever politicians are making an alliance with religion and making a cat's paw of it for furthering their own selfish purposes? While the best sons of India are longing for the cultural and political unification of India, we are seeing round us, on the other hand, the attempts of others to perpetuate our divisions in the name of religion. A good deal of the missionary propaganda in the country too is having a disruptive influence on the cultural and political life of India. Christian missionaries are now-a-days loud in proclaiming that their activities in India have nothing to do

with imperialism, but it was none the less a prominent Christian gentleman of India who declared some time back that if the Government had actively helped Christian proselytisation in this country they could have created here a large population who would have been more friendly to them than Indians generally are today under the impulse of nationalism. So too the Muslims have ever been on the look out for increasing their numbers in the country, and with the introduction of a system of government by the counting of heads, their communal ambitions have given a new vigour to their religious propaganda. The Hindus have always insisted on the equal validity of all religions and have hitherto laid little stress on aggressive missionary work of the Muslim or Christian type, but this attempt of others to undermine the indigenous culture in the ostensible name of their religion has awakened them to the gravity of the situation, and they too have of late showed signs of launching an aggressive missionary propaganda for recouping their numerical strength and thereby counteracting the onslaughts of other religionists on the culture of the land. Perhaps the modern Hindu might have in this respect brought religion down from the high level in which his ancestors used to maintain it before, but he cannot probably be blamed for this at the present time since such a change of policy has become a necessity for his very self-preservation. But in spite of all this it cannot be denied that this tendency in modern India to connect politics with religion and to hinder the growth of national unity by taking advantage of these religious differences is likely to discredit religion itself in the eye of many intellectuals, and one need not wonder if a sullen hostility to religion grows among some thoughtful men as in Bolshevik Russia. Again

this tendency of vested interests to safeguard their selfish gains under the cloak of religion is shown by the denial of social rights and humane treatment to a large section of people classed as 'untouchables' in this country. The supporters of untouchability should learn a lesson from Bolshevik Russia and understand that their reactionary propaganda will, in place of preserving religion, only alienate people more and more from its cause. If religion wants

that such long-standing injustices should be zealously preserved one can have little hope regarding its future. To those engaged in such propaganda and to others bent on creating disunion in the country in the name of religion, the example of Bolshevik Russia may prove a powerful eye-opener. But the question remains: Have these classes of people after all got any love of religion as opposed to petrified customs, economic interests and political privileges?

## SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA, SANNYASIN AND TEACHER

*By Sister Devamata*

### VII

MEDIAEVAL records tell us of a young monk who went to Brother Giles, one of the first followers and closest companions of St. Francis of Assisi, and complained that in his day's schedule there was too much labour and too little prayer. Brother Giles looked at him and replied dryly: "If you would beg of the Lord, first work for Him." These words might have been spoken by Swami Ramakrishnananda, so perfectly do they express his mood and attitude of mind. He had a strong belief in prayer, but not as a way of escape from work. Once I heard him admonish a devotee to pray every day and to make his prayers reach the Lord by their sincerity and earnestness; but never in my hearing did he offer to pray for anyone, or did others ask him to pray for them. If they had, they might have received the same answer that Brother Giles again gave to some one who came and said with lament in his tone, "Pray for me!" "Why don't you pray for yourself?" was Brother Giles' retort.

The Swami had little sympathy with those who made complaint to the Lord or begged of Him. Prayer must make one heroic, not beggarly. It must be an act of praise and thanksgiving, a communion, not a recital of needs to be provided. Contact with God should strip one of all sense of need or, to use the Swami's own words, "if a man will be selfish and beg of the Lord, let him be thoroughly selfish and demand the biggest thing he can think of—God Himself."

The Swami asked for nothing less. Heaven and even salvation were rewards too paltry to pray for. "Heaven," he said, "is a place created by *Maya* to bribe man and to entice him. We have heard of the sirens in mid-ocean, who are very beautiful to look at and who sing so sweetly that the sailors are irresistibly drawn to them; but as soon as the sirens touch them, they are transformed into beasts. So these heavenly pleasures and the senses are like sirens which entice poor sailors sailing on this ocean of life; and when they hold them in their clutches, they

transform them into brutes. The Scriptures say: 'Sleeping, eating, and propagating, these we have in common with the lower animals.' And how many of us do more than that? We have been transformed by these sirens of *Maya* until we are little superior to animals."

Heaven should never be our ideal, the Swami declared; not only because it is too small a goal to strive for, but also because it holds no promise of further attainment. The constant pursuit of celestial pleasures crowds out all spiritual effort. "In heaven," to quote the Swami, "there is no leisure, in hell there is no leisure; only here on this middle plane where the two meet is there leisure in which a soul can try to realize God. If a god wishes to attain salvation, he must come down and be born as a man. Heaven is only a place of continual festivities and enjoyments, but the Scriptures tell us that we must be absolutely detached from enjoyments of this world and from enjoyments of the next world."

An error common in the Occident, but rare in India, is to confound salvation with heaven; to regard them as synonymous. The confusion arises in the West from the fact that there happiness is looked upon as the goal, while in India it is liberation. Swami Ramakrishnananda was very definite on this point when we were talking together one afternoon. "Salvation," he explained, "does not consist in going to heaven. It is realizing that 'I am God's child,' if you are a *Viśiṣṭādvaitist*; or that 'I am one with God,' if you are an *Advaitist*. Both are one and the same." After a moment's pause he added: "So long as a man is struggling for his rights and believes he is the doer, he cannot feel the attraction of God. Only when he sits down and becomes perfectly surrendered does he begin to

be drawn upward. Then he says with full conviction: 'I can do nothing. Lord, do Thou act.' At once that Higher Power begins to exert its influence. That man who can throw himself at the feet of the Lord and say: 'All this is Thine. This body, mind, and soul all belong to Thee; of myself I am utterly helpless; do Thou take me,'—the Lord takes that man and makes his hands, his feet, his eyes and ears, His instruments. He speaks through his mouth; He works through his hands; He walks with his feet; and the man becomes a living representative of God. This is salvation."

Again he paused, swept into silence by the swift current of his thought. Then came these closing words: "Fill your heart with devotion, and your mind will turn naturally to God. The true devotee never thinks of himself. He is so full of the thought of God that his own self is forgotten. That is the best way to attain salvation."

Find God and forget yourself—this was the Swami's rule for gaining salvation, and the surest way to find God was by surrendering all to Him. Thus surrender and liberation became almost identical terms in the Swami's vocabulary. "Be wholly surrendered," he said. "The moment you can give up everything and know your own nothingness, at that moment God-vision will come and you will be free."

At another time he said, "It is possible for a man to attain salvation suddenly, by the special grace of God; but it can only be done if he can realize that God is all in all and that he is nothing. If he can realize this, then *Mukti* comes easily. What keeps us from seeing God? Selfishness, egotism, ambition, vanity, pride. The more we can minimise these, the sooner will we come to the goal. If we can get rid of them altogether, then freedom is ours."

"The more we try to fix our mind on God, the more quickly shall we forget ourselves and the more quickly shall we reach freedom. The best way to do this is not to think of ourselves in any way; merely to keep our minds on the presence of God."

"The man who has realized God will never lack for anything," he continued. "Whatever he needs will come to him. That is what Christ meant when he said, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of

heaven, and all things else will be added unto you.' This is literally true and it has been verified by history. Those men who have given up everything for the sake of the Lord and have felt no other attraction but God, are honoured and worshipped by the world.

"Surrender yourself completely to the Lord, then freedom will be yours. A smile will always play on your lips; your face will be shining, and your mind will be calm and peaceful."

(To be continued)

## REALIZATION OF THE BEAUTIFUL \*

*By Nicholas Roerich*

**P**LATO ordained in his treatises on statesmanship:—

"It is difficult to imagine a better method of education than that that has been discovered and verified by the experience of centuries; it can be expressed in two propositions: gymnastics for the body and music for the soul." "In view of this, one must consider education in music as the most important; thanks to it Rhythm and Harmony are deeply inrooted into the soul, dominate it, fill it with beauty and transform man into a beautiful thinker...He will partake of the Beautiful and rejoice at it, gladly realize it, become saturated with it and will arrange his life in conformity with it."

Of course the word music, in this case, should not be understood as routine musical education, as understood now, in its narrow sense. Music had in Athens, as service to all Muses, a far deeper and broader meaning than today. This conception embraced not only the harmony of sound, but the

whole domain of poetry, the whole domain of high perceptions, of exquisite forms and creation in general, in its best sense. The great service to the Muses was a real education of taste, which in everything cognizes the great Beautiful. Just to this eternal Beauty in all its vitality we have to revert, if only the ideas of high constructiveness are not rejected by humanity.

Hippias Maior (beauty) of the dialogue of Plato is not a bazy abstractness, but verily the most vital noble conception. The Beautiful in itself! The perceptible and conceivable! In this reality is contained an inspiring, encouraging welcome to the study and inrooting of all ordinances of the Beautiful. "The philosophic moral" of Plato is animated by the sense of the beautiful. And did not Plato himself, who was sold into slavery through the hatred of the tyrant Dionisius and when liberated and dwelling in the gardens of the

\* (From the book "Agni")

Academy, prove through his example, the vitality of a beautiful path? Of course Plato's gymnastics were not the coarse football or anti-cultural breaking of noses of modern prize-fights. The gymnastics of Plato were the same gates to the Beautiful, the discipline of Harmony and uplifting of the body into the spiritual spheres.

Not once we spoke about the introduction in school of a chair of ethics of life, a course of the art of thinking. Without the education of the general realization of the beautiful, these two courses will again remain a dead letter. Again in the course of only a few years the high vital principles of ethics will turn into a dead dogma, if they will not be imbued with the Beautiful.

Many vital conceptions of antiquity have become in our household belittled and vulgar, instead of the deserved expansion. Thus the wide and lofty service to the Muses turned into a narrow conception of playing one instrument. When you hear nowadays the word music, you imagine first of all a lesson of music often with conventional limitations. When you hear the word Museum, one understands it as a store-room of any kind of art objects. As every store-house, this conception creates a certain flavour of deadliness. Such limited conception of the word Museum, as a storage place, so deeply entered our understanding, that when one pronounces this conception in its original meaning—Muzeon—then no one understands what is really meant. Yet every Hellin of even average education would at once know that Muzeon means first of all the Home of Muses.

Foremost all Muzeon is the abode of all aspects of the Beautiful; not at all in the sense of only storing different kinds of art creations, but in the sense of most vital and creative application

of them in life. Thus one often hears nowadays that people express surprise when a Museum, as such, occupies itself with all spheres of Art, occupies itself with the education of good taste and with the spreading of the sense of the Beautiful.

Here we remembered the ordinances of Plato. But in the same way one may remember also Pythagoras with his Laws of the Beautiful, with his adamant foundations of cosmic realizations. The ancient Hellins went so far as to crown their Pantheon with an altar to the Unknown God. In this exaltation of spirit they came close to the refined inexpressible conception of the ancient Hindus, who pronouncing "Neti, neti" by no means wanted to say anything negative, but on the contrary, saying "not this, not this" manifested thereby the untold greatness of an inexpressible Concept.

It is significant that such great conceptions were not abstract, as if living only in the mind and reason; no, they dwelled in the very heart, as something living, life-bringing, inalienable and indestructible, as defined so beautifully in the Bhagavad Gita. In the heart was a flame that sacred fire, which was at the base of all flaming commandments also of the hermits of Mt. Sinai. The same sacred fire moulded the precious images of St. Theresa, St. Francis, St. Sergius and all the Fathers of the "Love of the Good," who knew so much and were understood so little.

We speak of the education of good taste, as of a matter of truly basic world significance of every country. When we speak about vital ethics, which should become the favourite school hour of every child, we appeal to the contemporary heart, pleading to it for expansion, if even only to the extent of ancient ordinances.

Can one consider as natural the fact that the conception so glorified already in the time of Pythagoras and Plato, has been so narrowed now and lost its actual meaning, after all the ages of so-called progress? Pythagoras already in the fifth century B. C. symbolized in himself the whole harmonious "Pythagorean Life". It was Pythagoras who affirmed music and astronomy as sisters in science. Pythagoras, who was called by bigots a charlatan, must be horrified to see how instead of a harmonious development our contemporary life has been broken up and mutilated and that we do not even understand the meaning of the beautiful hymn to the sun—to Light.

Today very strange formulas sometimes appear in the press. For instance that the flourishing of the intellect is the sign of degeneration. A very strange formula, if only the author does not attribute to the word intellect some special narrow meaning. Of course if the word intellect is only taken as the expression of the conventional withered mind, then to some extent this formula may have its foundation. But it is dangerous in case the author understands intellect as intelligence, which first of all should be connected with the education of good taste as the most vital principle of life.

Quite recently before our eyes in the West has been adopted the new word—*intelligentzia*. In the beginning this newcomer was met rather suspiciously, but soon it was adopted in literature. It would be important to determine whether this expression symbolises the intellect, or according to ancient conceptions it corresponds to the education of good taste.

If it is a symbol of a refined and expanded consciousness then we have to greet this innovation, which perhaps

will remind us once more of ancient beautiful principles.

In my letter "Synthesis" the difference of conceptions of Culture and Civilization were discussed. Both these conceptions are sufficiently separated even in standard dictionaries. Therefore let us not return to these two consecutive conceptions, even if some one would be content with the conception of civilization without dreaming about the higher conception of culture.

But remembering about *intelligentzia* it is permissible to ask, whether this conception belongs to Civilization, as to expression of intellect or whether it does already touch a higher region, that is to say, whether it belongs to the region of Culture, in which already the heart and spirit act. Of course, if we assume that the expression *intelligentzia*, should remain only within the limitation of the mind, then there would be no need to burden with it our literary vocabulary. One may permit an innovation only in such cases, when really something new is introduced, or at least when ancient principles are renewed in present modern circumstances.

Of course every one will agree that *intelligentzia*, this aristocracy of the Spirit, belongs to Culture and only in this connection one could greet this new literary expression.

In this case the education of good taste belongs of course first of all to the *intelligentzia*, and not only does it belong, but it becomes its duty. Not fulfilling this duty *intelligentzia* has no right for existence and condemns itself to savagery.

The education of good taste cannot be something abstract. Above all this is a vital attainment in all spheres of life, for where can there be a boundary to the service to the Muses of ancient Hellas? If in the old days this service

was understood in its full glory and adapted to life in the whole beauty of its principle, then should we not be ashamed, if in superstition and bigotry we shall cut off the radiant wings of the rising spirits?

When we propose ethics as a course in schools, as a theme most inspiring, limitless, full of constructive principles, we thus at the same time presuppose the transmutation of taste, as a defence against vulgarity and ugliness.

Andromeda said: "And I brought thee the Fire!" The ancient Hellin, the follower of Euripides, understands the meaning of this Fire and why this Agni is so precious. We, however, in most cases shall babble about this inspiring calling conception as about phosphor matches. We attach the high conception of Phosphor—the bringer of Light—to a match and try to light with it our extinguished hearth, in order to prepare the broth for today. But where is Tomorrow, this radiant wonderful Tomorrow?

We have forgotten about it. We have forgotten because we have lost the ability of searching, have lost the refined taste, which urges to betterment, to dreams, to higher consciousness. Dreams have become like dull slumber; but he who does not know how to dream, does not belong to the future, does not belong to humanity with its high Ideal.

Even the simple truth, that dreams about the future are the basic distinction of man from animal, has already become a truism. But truism in itself is no longer a generally accepted truth, as it should be, but has become the synonym of a truth of which one should not think altogether. Nevertheless, disregarding everything, even in times of greatest difficulties and world crisis,

let us not defer the thought about the education of taste, let us not put off the thought of life-bringing ethics, as of a necessary course of school education. Let us not forget the art of thinking, the art of memory and let us forever remember the treasure of the heart.

"A certain hermit left his retreat and came with the message, saying to everyone: 'Thou hast a heart.' When he was asked why he does not speak out mercy, patience, devotion, love and all other benevolent foundations of life, he replied: 'If they only do not forget the heart, the rest will adjust itself.' Verily can we appeal for love, if it has no place to reside? And where could patience dwell, when its abode is closed? Thus in order not to torture ourselves with inapplicable blisses, one must build that garden, which will flourish in the realization of the heart. Let us stand firmly on the foundation of the heart and let us understand that without the heart we are as a lost shell." Thus the Wise Ones ordained. Thus ordains Agni Yoga. Thus let us accept and apply.

Without the untiring realization of the Beautiful, without incessant refinement of the heart and consciousness, we would make the laws of earthly existence cruel and deadly in their hatred against humanity. In other words we would, when killing the Beautiful, assist the most shameful debased downfall.

The Romans said: *Sub pretextu juris summum jus saepe summa injuria; suaviter in modo fortiter in re.* (Under pretext of justice a strict application of law is often the gravest injury. Be gentle in manner thou, resolute in execution).

Let us be broad and resolute in the realization of the Beautiful!

# THE SYSTEM OF RAMANUJA WITH SIDE-LIGHTS ON THOSE OF MADHYA AND SANKARA\*

By K. A. Krishnaswamy Aiyer, B.A.

(Continued from page 378)

## Criticism

**ALTHOUGH** Ramanuja started with the aim of re-establishing the real distinctions of life, he has opened no new avenues of thought by which they can be established on a rational basis. His reliance on the Vedas and on common sense robs his utterances of any philosophical value, while his denial of all illusions makes one stare and gasp at his assurance. In ordinary life we do observe distinctions and we do assume their reality, but a simple appeal to this common belief will not help to invest them with a speculative significance. Objects are cognized by the senses, and the latter usually do not deceive. But how are the illusions accounted for? To say that there are no errors, no illusions is to be untrue to life. Besides, a dream is a palpable *hallucination*; there is nothing outside of us to support or survive it. Dreams are everyday occurrences, and the objects beheld in them have no pretensions to reality. The explanation that they are momentary creations of God is the device of a theologian, and not of a thinker. Quotations of texts and interpretations are out of place, and dream-experiences being unquestionably real can be shoved aside only at the cost of philosophical solidarity. Similarly, the illusions of waking life have to be reckoned with if the absolute reliability of the senses has to be placed on an unimpeachable

basis. Illusions and hallucinations are not detected as such at the time. They appear real and natural. The discovery of their nature comes later and explanation follows. The mind and the senses behave alike in true or in false perception. There is no blunting or quickening of the faculties in the one or the other case. Besides, how the senses which only serve to effectuate perception, should also guarantee the reality of the objects presented as well as their own, must be made to rest on a philosophical principle which determines the nature of reality, instead of the senses being saddled with the double function of aiding perception and at the same time testifying to the reality of the percept. Ramanuja has failed to furnish such a principle, nor has Madhya succeeded where Ramanuja failed. Ramanuja cannot be said to have demolished the position of the Idealist. The objects of common life presuppose consciousness, for they are known to us only as percepts which imply a perceiver. Their reality is thus not independent of consciousness. Further, their individuality, distinctions and multiplicity, which would entitle them to reality, are only relative, not absolute. An object, as Gentile remarks, is individualized by its position in time and space, by its *where* and *when*, not on account of any virtue in itself. (P. 324 "Vedanta or the Science of Reality"). Its distinction from the rest is due to

qualities each of which is a universal, referring to a class, and therefore communal. When we say that a man is *tall*, his tallness is relative only. If all men possessed absolute tallness, distinctions would disappear. As Caird observes: "An absolute distinction by its very nature would be self-contradictory, for it would cut off all connection between the things it distinguished. It would annihilate the relation implied in the distinction and so it would annihilate the distinction itself." (P. 135, Hegel). Similarly, multiplicity implies number, and number inheres only in an individual belonging to a class, thus pointing to their common character. A horse and a dog are two animals. A dog and a stick are two things, entities, beings. Hence even plurality, or multiplicity is not an independent concept, but depends on that of community. Thus the conception of a multiplicity of individual and distinct objects cannot justify their claims to absolute reality. They are real only for practical purposes. If individual things were absolutely distinct, their multiplicity would be robbed of all signification. If, as Ramanuja contended, there were no degrees of reality, but the world, the soul, and God Himself were reduced to one level or order of reality, then the reality of God as well as of the rest would be interdependent and relative, never absolute.

But Ramanuja might be imagined to urge that the triad namely, the world, the soul and God, is one, as God owns the other two as His body; and since God is the Highest Reality, the rest also must partake of His nature and be equally real. Here we knock against his other concept namely, the embodiedness of God. He reconciled the unity of existence declared by the Upanishads, with the multiplicity required by common experience, by conceiving God

as including the souls and matter as His body. This solution appeared to him as the triumph of common sense. But it presents an insuperable difficulty. Without establishing on unimpeachable grounds the soul as an entity distinct from the physical body, and God, as the Moral Ruler of the Universe, his position does not admit of a rational justification. In the first place, what is the relation between the soul and the body? A relation is seen to exist between things of the same kind, between one material body and another. But if the soul should be connected with the body, even temporarily, the connection is unimaginable. Conceding, however, the possibility of such relation between the two, how can we extend the relation so as to conceive it between God on the one hand and the souls and matter on the other? A body is an object cognizable by the soul, and the latter cannot by its very nature play the role of an object except to itself. If, therefore, in the sense in which we speak of a soul and its body, we refer to the soul as God's body, the term "body" becomes meaningless. I can regard God as the object of my meditation or thought, but ever retaining the nature of a subject, as I must, I cannot regard my soul, as the object of God; and even if I force such a conception on my mind, it resists the coercion and regains its subjectivity. Both God and the notion of my being His object become simultaneously turned into an object of my present consciousness, proving thereby the futility of my endeavour to conceive an impossibility. A relation can exist only between two distinct terms or objects. Between the soul and God who is all-inclusive no relation can be conceived, as neither is essentially an object.

Ramanuja anxiously discusses the various connotations of the term "*body*".

and decides upon adopting it in the sense of (1) complete subordination or control (2) a means of activity and enjoyment to the soul, as the possessor of an organic body. This parallelism between God and an organism has its own pitfalls. An organism can have freedom to act only when it possesses the corresponding member or limb. Its own happiness and preservation depend on its members. In the next place, although externally an organism may boast of its control over the members of its body, it certainly cannot direct its own digestion, circulation of blood and secretion of vital juices, which are due to a higher power, Nature, to which the organism in all its aspects is but an unquestioned slave. Reasoning from these known data of experience, it is unintelligible how God can retain His control over the souls or matter, if they are His body, and how, in that case, He can escape the predicament of losing His independence, if His integrity rests upon His connection with a body. Besides, if God is a conscious being, the individual soul must affect Him only as an object and if still the soul is His body, the soul, might, with a parity of reasoning, claim God for its body, because He is *its* object. In any case, God cannot realise the subjective nature of the soul, cannot be to the soul what the soul is to itself. Moreover, a body individualizes spirit, and is a clog on its freedom, as Ramanuja himself admits in his comment on the Brahma Sutras 111.2 and 5. A soul is turned thereby into an individual among individuals. Invested with a body, likewise, God is individualized, and He finds Himself in a realm comprising but His own complex unity, and not in a realm comprising other individual spirits opposed to Him *as a whole*. Further God ceases to be an all-inclusive Reality, since He cannot include

me to whom He is an object. The make-up of the system is thus poetical, and cannot stand the test of reason. For when this imaginary cement of God's embodiedness is dissolved, and the mask is uplifted, Ramanuja's position betrays its unmistakable identity with the undiluted Pluralism of Madhva; and the surviving entities God, souls and matter are left to stare helplessly and eternally at one another in all their mutual opposition, without a single principle to unite them, left in a chaos of independence and plurality.

This indissoluble tie between God and His body is inconvenient to God Himself. If the body depends on God for its existence, so does God depend upon His body for His life. Logically, a relation affects both the terms that it unites. If the body is said to be only a mode of God, but a real mode, then all the changes to which the mode is liable must affect God Himself. There is no possible escape from this logical necessity. Spinoza indeed postulated modes to God, but they are unreal. They are limitations that we impose upon Him.

There is an intrinsic weakness likewise in Ramanuja's explanation of Creation and Dissolution, as arising from the contraction and expansion of God's body. In the first place, of the souls and matter which form His body, the souls cannot be conceived to swell and shrink,—processes confined to material bodies. In the next place, a relation between God and His body being admitted, God cannot be free from the effects of the changes to which His body is subject. Either the relation must be thinned to a vanishing point, or the immutability of Divine nature must be wholly abandoned.

In the third place, to God a body is either natural or necessary. In the latter case, He is imperfect; in the former, helpless. Either way, God

deserves our sympathy more than our admiration or adoration.

Moreover, an organic being with its body,—an idea which has furnished Ramanuja with the ground for his theory—is seen extended in space, and develops in time. That is to say, an organism lives in time and space. God as an embodied being must similarly be bound by time and space, a condition to which Ramanuja's system must submit, as he regards God to possess the souls and matter as His parts. Now parts imply space; and contraction and expansion, time. It is regrettable that Ramanuja has not attempted to tackle time and space which he seems to have looked upon as elements extraneous to the world and not demanding an explanation. Creation and dissolution of the world he describes as God's sport which laughs at causation.

The relation of God to His body might be explained not as that between the whole and its parts but as that between the Universal and the Particular. In that case, the individual object resulting from their combination must be admitted to be an unreal existent. For the Universal and the Particular are equally concepts; and, as Hegel claims, are both real as objective concepts, while an object of perception which is an existent is unreal, being nothing more than a bundle of Universals. This view, however, cannot be acceptable to Ramanuja from whose system all unreality is banished. Besides, the notion of expansion and contraction which is advanced to explain the creation and dissolution of the world will not allow of the relation between God and His body being conceived as that between the Universal and the Particular. For the two latter as concepts cannot swell or shrink like a material object.

Unfortunately Ramanuja did not start with a clear idea of reality. In his eagerness to claim reality for the world and the manifold, he went to the opposite extreme of denying all errors and illusions. These he resolved to dispel from God's Universe. His notion of reality seems to be based on four assumptions: (1) The senses are organs of true perception. (2) Things are real as they produce real effects. (3) A thing to be real need not be found in every place and time. Whatever exists is connected with space and time and is by that circumstance made real. (4) Whatever is not sublated by subsequent experience is real. We shall now discuss the validity of these criteria.

(1) The senses behave in the same manner in false as well as in true perception. At the time, they give no indications of the falsity of an experience. A shell appears like real silver, and the mistake, when detected, is invariably referred to a past experience. This would not be the case if the senses always guaranteed true perception. In an immediacy of presentation the eye cannot detect the falsity of the appearance. If it can show the real to be real, then to be a safe guide, it *must report the false to be false at the moment* and not wait for a subsequent experience to comment on the first. This it can never do. The illusion is an after-discovery. In Science, History and Mathematics, errors of observation, of narration and of calculation are continually shown up by subsequent thinkers, and progress means elimination of errors, and revelation of new truths. To say that there is no illusion or to explain it afterwards on scientific principles is to overshoot the mark and does not help to remove actual errors or illusions from life. When, for instance, I stand before a mirror

at the distance of say three feet, I find the reflection at the distance of six feet from me. Is the space between the mirror and the image real? In which part of real space can it be located? It must be admitted to be purely illusory. The mirror may be useful in a hundred ways, but the reflection is clearly illusory. The authority of the senses cannot be final in apprehending reality.

(2) The argument that things are real because their effects are real, as if effects were not things, is obviously untenable. A child, and even some grown-ups run screaming with terror from the figure of a snake though of lacker-work. Besides, causes and effects belong to the same order of existence; and the reality of the cause cannot be inferred from the assumed reality of the effect. They stand or fall together and the reality of the effect demands the same explanation as that of the cause. In dreams, we meet with causes and effects both sublated by waking.

(3) The next point to be considered is whether the mere fact of being in space and time can confer a right upon a thing to be admitted as real. Now, what are the credentials of time and space to pronounce on the reality of an object? On what grounds does their own reality rest, since they do not themselves exist in time and space? We have instances of dream-objects existing in unreal space and time, and of unreal space and motion in all reflections in mirrors. This test fails also.

(4) The test of sublation by subsequent experience has the disadvantage of not being serviceable at the moment of actual perception, and the possibility of later sublation ever threatens every experience. Practical life would be impossible if we were not to act, till all chances of sublatability of a present experience by a future one should be

exhausted. In life we assume perception to be real till it is proved to be otherwise. It is this universal tendency that makes dream-perceptions "terribly real" and stands as an irremovable obstacle in the way of one's being convinced of the unreality of waking perception while waking lasts. Ramanuja, however, seems to waver in adopting this criterion wholly. While, on page 75 of his comment on Sutra I, i, 1, he concedes that the dream objects are unreal, because of their sublation in waking life, he claims reality for them in III, 2 and 3, for they are God's creations though of a short duration, and God cannot create anything unreal. (Vide Thibaut's translation of Vedanta Sutas, Part III)

It would thus seem that none of the aforesaid criteria are adequate to define reality.

Sankara contrived to leap over these speculative hurdles by his illusionism so-called. Reality he defined as that which cannot be denied, that cannot be conceived to non-exist; and to accommodate practical life, he postulated three degrees of reality. His philosophical cabinet, accordingly, contains three shelves. On the highest he placed the Self or Pure consciousness, whose non-existence can be *never* imagined. It is absolute Reality. On the next lower shelf, he placed the objects of waking life, which cannot be denied while waking lasts, but which are concomitant and conterminous with waking. This is the sphere of religion, science, speculation and action. Into the lowest he shoved *dream objects* and illusions of *waking*. The reality of these cannot be denied till they are known to be such when sublated by later experience.

Madhva brings forward no new reasons why the external world should be regarded as real, and the remarks

made on Ramanuja's position apply to his, *pari passu*.

Ramanuja's as well as Madhva's explanation of Evil as the effect of Karma, though it may have a dialectical value is far from satisfactory. It is a sore place in his uncompromising view of God as a Personal Being. For it is the paramount duty of every theist to safeguard the interests of God, to preserve intact His Power, Wisdom and Goodness: and the permission for Evil to enter the region of mortal life, is a libel on His Power, or His Mercy, or both. To introduce an alien element, Karma, as a real inevitable curb put on God in His exercise of those divine virtues, is to dethrone God, and to blast the tender hopes of poor humanity. Though Sankara, too, drew upon the theory of Karma he dropped it the moment he felt its real inadequacy. (*Vide* his comment on II, 1, 33 Br. Sut.)

As a religious system, however, offered to the hungry souls, Ramanuja's

must be admitted to be as great as any other conceived by man. Its insistence on self-surrender and service ennobles life and spiritualizes it. His love and sympathy for all, irrespective of caste or denomination, the great social reforms he initiated, the spirit of universal brotherhood with which he leavened his doctrines, and his selfless labours for the uplift of man, in the face of persecutions and privations, must place him in the first rank of benefactors to the human race. The defects in his philosophy are not traceable to any want of clear vision—for his intellect was of the highest order—but are obviously due to the inherent difficulty of the problem which he ventured to solve,—the problem of reconciling Theism with Reason, for the proper realm of Theism is Faith. He has not succeeded in a task in which no one is likely to succeed. Nevertheless it detracts nothing from the glory of his life and endeavour.

## SAINT SIRUTTHONDA

*By R. Ramakrishnan, M. A., L. T.*

**I**NNUMERABLE are the paths of Sadhana or spiritual discipline, and aspirants after God-realisation choose the one best suited to their native temperament and their worldly position. To all it may not be possible (and even if possible, it may not be desirable, for men's natures differ widely) to renounce worldly connections and strive after the blessedness of spirit through self-analysis and deep introspection carried on in the austere silence of deep solitude. There are some men who find endless delight in serving the poor, the lowly and the down-trodden; and this service becomes the one idea of their life, the

one occupation, the one all-engrossing and all-important work. He who becomes mad after an idea, he alone sees light, says Swami Vivekananda. The world may call him a monomaniac and a crazy man, but it is such men that have made the world what it is. All the prophets and reformers, the scientists and explorers are mad men, mad after an ideal, to the realisation of which single object they utilise their concentrated energies. It is not the apparent magnitude or the external paraphernalia appertaining to a chosen spiritual path that brings success, but the fidelity and the perseverance with which the path is pursued. Whatever

be the mode of Sadhana chosen, if only the aspirant plunges headlong into it and practises it to perfection, he is sure to reach the goal. Man has the option in the matter of the path; but having chosen one he must adhere to it with marvellous tenacity and must not compromise, for indeed there is no half-way house to freedom and deliverance. Truth is greater than any other thing, and so the seeker after truth must be prepared to give up everything else, if so required, in the interests of his pursuit. He must be ready to lose all that he considers nearest and dearest, even his own life. Only after this perfect self-sacrifice does one get a vision of the glorious realm that is yearned for. Many of us on the other hand fancy ourselves to be very pious and religious, but our piety and religion last only so long as they do not come into conflict with our material interests, but at the very instant of such conflict, when we are asked to choose between what appears to us to be the tangible material advantage and the hazy spiritual gain of doubtful value, they disappear as mist before the morning sun. This is not religion, in any sense of that term of wide significance; this is sheer hypocrisy or what is worse, self-delusion.

“अतिथिदेवो भव,” says the Upanishad. Why should the guest be adored? Because he is the embodiment of divinity. And the greatest of charities is the gift of food. It comes only next to the bestowing of wisdom. A hungry stomach is unfit for anything. Food is the mainspring of all human activity. As the Upanishad says, all creatures are born out of food, and in food they live. And the relieving of hunger has long been considered as one of the elementary duties of man to his brethren. Swami Vivekananda wished very much that each man took upon

himself the noble task of feeding every-day a lame man or a blind man and adoring him as Daridra Narayana. This service of the poor is of immense benefit to the spiritual aspirant. For it will cleanse the mind of all impurities as caste superiority, pride of wealth, arrogance of high position, selfishness of interests. It will broaden the mind till the spiritual student feels all creation at one with himself. The goal of the spiritual path is the merging of the individual self in the Universal Self, and what better way is there for realising that goal than the service of the visible gods on earth?

The life of Saint Sirutthonda is an illustration of the readiness for utmost self-sacrifice of a real spiritual aspirant and of the grandeur of what to many may seem an insignificant event, viz., the service of the divine poor. His life was not full of incidents, but it was a continuous flow of purity, a flow not spectacular or dazzling, but sweetly life-giving. Sirutthonda was a devout devotee of Lord Shiva. He was the captain of elephants under a royal chieftain, and was a brave fighter. This combination of martial valour with soft piety was rather strange, but it only shows that Sirutthonda was a true Karma Yogi. He did the duties of the position in which he was placed, in accordance with the teachings of the Gita, and was held in high esteem by the chieftain. Once however the master came to know of his illustrious captain's spiritual leanings, and relieved him of his military duties, so that he might pursue his discipline with greater ardour.

Sirutthonda was blessed in his wife, a lady who was a model of chastity and all the other feminine virtues, one who belonged to the 'divine group' of

women, and was really 'the partner to her husband in the path of righteousness.' The couple made it a point to feed one devotee of the Lord every day. For the Lord has said, 'They worship me best who worship my worshippers.' Sri Ramakrishna has said that although the Lord dwells in every being, He is specially manifest in a devotee. Moreover birds of the same feather flock together; and there is nothing surprising in Sirutthonda's practice. Feeding a man every day may in itself seem a thing of no great significance, but the devotion to the Lord is the philosopher's stone that makes all things golden. This small thing in the hands of Sirutthonda became an event of uncommon magnitude. We can very well picture the pious couple's daily round of duties—the rising in the morning with the Lord's names on their lips, the preparations for the worship of the human God, the glow of joy in their faces as they served the revered guest, the small afternoon conference with the guest when holy things were spoken of and holy events in pilgrimages recalled, the evening visit to the village temple etc. It was indeed a strangely peaceful life.

But to all true devotees the hour of supreme test arrives. The Lord seems to be jealous of His blessedness and does not bestow it on man until he shows himself worthy of it. In Sri Ramakrishna's life we read how the Mother did not appear to him till he was about to immolate himself. And he himself subjected his most beloved disciple Swami Vivekananda to a severe test. But it is equally true that all true aspirants emerge gloriously victorious from the test.

One day Sirutthonda was not able to get a guest. It was noon, and he went out of the house to search for any new comer to the village and bring him

home. In his absence a devotee of Northern India called at the house and enquired after Sirutthonda. The wife was at home, and requested the welcome stranger to wait for a while for her husband's return. The stranger was not willing to get into the house when the master was not within; but he said he would wait at a distance in the cool shade of a tree.

After a fruitless quest Sirutthonda returned sad and melancholy, for he was afraid his vow would be broken that day. But the news of the arrival of the North Indian gladdened him, and he ran to fetch the stranger.

The stranger was indeed a strange man. 'Save yourself the trouble of feeding me, friend. I am pleased to have seen you. I am a northerner and have queer tastes. It may not be possible for you to feed me,' so spoke the stranger.

'No, Sir, there is nothing impossible for me when it is a question of serving the Lord's devotees,' replied the host.

'I do not know what you will think of me, but I eat beef once in six months and today I must have that dish. Obviously you cannot kill a cow,' was the stranger's answer.

Sirutthonda was unnerved. But he was prepared to go to any extent. He said, 'I have plenty of cows at home. It is a matter of a few minutes to get ready the dishes you require.'

The answer of the stranger was a bolt from the blue. 'I do not eat beef, exactly. I eat human flesh—the flesh of a five-year-old boy of symmetrical form. The boy must be the only son of his parents and must be butchered by them without the least tinge of sorrow.'

'I shall prepare the dish and come again to take you home,' said Sirutthonda. He was more than a match for the stranger.

Sirutthonda's wife too did not complain about the unearthly cannibalism of the stranger or about her husband's mysterious behaviour in trying to satisfy his desires. She had a son just five years of age who was at that time away in the school. The parents decided to offer him to the guest.

Chirala—for that was the child's name—lay on his mother's lap with the implicit trust that children alone are capable of, and with the smile that shows the mother's lap for them is the haven of peace. And the cruel sword did its gory work. The mother's instinct, the father's love, everything remained suppressed by the imperious urge of steadfastness to the ideal. Not a tear fell, not a sigh was heard. And the dish was ready.

The guest sat to dinner. He wanted that Sirutthonda too must take part of the preparation. The latter agreed to eat his own son's flesh. But the trouble did not end there. 'If you have a son, bring him here. It is good to have a child by us,' spoke the guest. Love of children in a cannibal seemed ludicrous, but the host only said, 'He will not be available now'. But the other would not be silenced. 'Search him out,' he demanded.

The parents went out of the house and called aloud for the son. And what a miracle! The son came running from school! The joy of the father knew no bounds, and he returned in haste to the dining apartment, only to find that the guest had disappeared. The couple were again in misery, but a

vision of the Lord was vouchsafed to them at the time. The cannibal was the Lord Himself. And Sirutthonda felt blessed.

It is easy to dismiss this narrative as a crude miracle story on the ground that no father is worthy of that name if he butchers his son to satisfy the base needs of a guest. But we must never forget that we should not judge the conduct of these exceptional souls by our code of morals, for they have entirely different values of things. No human judgment is ever absolute. A scientist who spends whole nights in gazing at the stars is a mad man to the prosperous business magnate. A monk who considers all the gold in the world as worth practically nothing seems to the millionaire an incorrigible fool. But the scientist and the monk know their business and have their joy and their reward. And although the action of Sirutthonda may seem to modern minds wholly illogical and even insane, it is well to remember that underlying this bald recital of the story are precious truths. The preparedness of the aspirant for the utmost sacrifice in his power and the certainty of this supreme act of sacrifice leading to fulfilment and blessedness are clearly seen in Sirutthonda's career. Secondly, his example shows us the extraordinary possibilities of the householder's life.

Let us assimilate the spirit of Sirutthonda's life. His sacrifice is really astonishing. Upon such sacrifice the gods themselves throw incense.

# THOUGHTS ON THE STUDY OF ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

*By Manmathanath Majumder, M. A.*

*(Continued from last issue)*

**H**ISTORY has thus, from the standpoint of Indian thinkers, received the widest possible interpretation to cover, from the atomic movement of molecules to the cataclysmic occurrences in the world. It connotes a much wider meaning than is usually understood and is the repository of all thought-waves that dance and move on the shoreless expanse of time. 'Itihasas' according to Sayana, are "cosmological myths" or accounts, such as: "In the beginning this universe was nothing but water." (Pargiter. Ancient Indian Historical Tradition) Although 'Itihasa' is very rarely found applied to such accounts, and the definition of 'Itihasa' and the references to it in Kautilya's Arthashastra clearly negative it, and Yashka's use of the word 'Aitihasik' distinctly contradicts it, yet there is a great deal of truth in all these opinions. The apparent contradictory views with regard to the character and contents of history seem to have arisen out of the epitomic and versatile character of the latter, and each individual critic interpreted it in the way he found suitable to convey the importance of some particular branch of our ancient Hindu scriptures, to his readers.

I have already quoted Sayana's interpretation of history. Yashka uses 'Aitihasik' for those who interpreted the Veda with reference to traditional history (Vedic Index i, 122). Kautilya again calls the Itihasa a Veda and puts it on the same footing as the Atharva-

Veda. He also defines the Itihasa thus: "Itihasa means the Purana, Itivṛtha (history), Akhyayika (tale), Udaharana (illustrated story), the Dharmashastra and the Arthashastra." The Chhandogya Upanishad goes a step forward and says: "The (hymns of the) Atharvangiras are the bees, the Itihasa Purana is the flower." Divested of metaphor the sentence clearly expresses that those hymns drew their sustenance from the Itihasa and Purana. Further the Satapatha Brahmana calls the Itihasa-Purana "honey-offerings to the gods." Similarly the Sankhayana Sruta Sutra and Asvalayana Sutra also say. "The Itihasa-Veda is the Veda; this is the Veda."

As can be gathered from the above references, 'Itihasa' partook of the character of the Puranas, the Vedas, the traditions, fables and mythology, and lastly of quasi-historical narratives. But at the same time one cannot be accused of over-zealous interpretation, if one chooses to conclude, out of these references, that 'Itihasa' was a separate and definite composition.

Now again, we see that "Krishna Dvaipayana divided The Single Veda into four and arranged them and so was called Vyasa. He entrusted them to his four disciples, one to each, namely Paila, Vaisampayana, Jaimini, and Sumantu. Then with tales, anecdotes, songs and stories that had come down from ages, he compiled a Purana and taught it and the Itihasa to his fifth disciple, the Suta Romaharshana or

Lomaharshana. After that he composed the Mahabharata " (Pargiter).

Herein also we see a clear mention that the 'Itihasa' and the 'Purana' were different subjects, and about the subject-matter of the latter there is a detailed description whereas the author is silent about the origin and constituent elements of the former, and the two preceded the composition of the Mahabharata. Moreover we do not remember to have come across in the whole range of Indian literature, any particular work on history except the Puranas in general sense, which treat of the genealogies of ancient Rishis and kings with additional topics of mythological character. The Mahabharata, too, is more often treated as one of the two great epics in the chronology of literary development of India, than a work exclusively devoted to historical interests, clearly depicting the successive stages of evolution of India's national ideal, and how India, in spite of heavy odds and tremendous material forces arrayed against her, succeeded in implanting firmly on the nation's mind the great humanising force of her civilisation. But a closer study of the contents of both the Puranas and the 'Itihasa' will convince the reader that in the evolution of India's historical literature, 'Purana' and 'Itihasa' are correlated terms and the Mahabharata is a logical development of the former and a fulfilment of the latter. Let us now have a brief review of the development in the following lines.

The 'Sutas,' the 'Pauranikas' and the 'Aitihasikas' are interchangeable terms and they indicate stages of successive modernisation or secularisation of the function of the historian. The 'Suta' mentioned here is not the caste that was described as the offspring of a Kshatriya father and Brahmin mother; that was a later application of the term. This

'Suta' was a bard like the "Magadha" and the origin of both is placed in the time of a primeval king Prithu, son of Vena. These ancient bards handed down traditions, tales, facts along with genealogies of kings and Rishis of old, from disciple to disciple till we come down to the time of Veda Vyasa, the first compiler of Indian literature into the broad divisions that we find them today. This statement of the duty of the 'Sutas' refers obviously to the earliest times before the Purana was compiled because there would have been no genealogies or ballads to collect and fashion into the Purana unless they had been preserving such ancient traditions all along.

Again 'Purana' often means 'ancient' but sometimes 'belonging to, connected with or mentioned in, the Purana' (Mahabharata). Other terms such as "Purana-jna," "Purana vid" and "Pauranika" often mean merely, "one who knows the Purana" and are found so used. But at other times the foregoing terms imply more and can only mean, "one who knows the ancient tales." Thus, as regards "Purana-jnas," Vamsa-vids are cited as quoting an old verse, sung by "Purana-jnas" as older authorities about 'Mandhatr'. 'Pauraniks' are cited as quoting an old verse sung by 'Purana-jnas' about Datta-Atreya.

The way in which these terms are introduced shows that they do not refer to the present Puranas and hardly even to the original Purana, but more probably to the ancient minstrels because no songs could have been handed down unless there had been a succession of minstrels, as is natural.

This function of the 'Sutas' and the 'Pauranikas' is admirably confirmed by Veda Vyasa when he taught the Purana and the 'Itihasa' to his fifth

disciple, the "Suta" Romaharshana or Lomaharshana.

The contents of the two, 'Purana' and 'Itihasa,' agree also in general treatment, differing in details in some respects. 'Purana' is, according to Matsya (53, 69), any "old tale" or "ancient lore" in the general sense of the term and 'Itihasa' expresses a story of fact in accordance with its derivation Iti, ha, asa—which rather denotes actual traditional history. The Vedarthadipika calls all old stories it cites, 'Itihasa'. "Purana is applied to a single story, whether quasi-historical or mythological or instructive; and so also an 'Itihasa' may be an ordinary tale or quasi-historical, fanciful, mythological or even dialectic."

This thin line of distinction that is supposed to exist between the two seems to disappear as Mr. Pargiter suggests that "the line between fact and fable was hardly definite and gradually became blurred especially where *historical sense* was lacking." This lack of historical sense is a strong point in the suggestion of Mr. Pargiter and it is this which ultimately led to a clear breach between the two and shifted the differentia altogether to a new background. The lack of historical element was subsequently compensated for by the addition of a few more topics of interest, and later on the Puranas developed the Pancha-lakshana :—

सर्गश्च प्रतिसर्गश्च वंशो मन्वन्तराणि च ।

वंश्यानुचरितं चैव पुराणं पञ्चलक्षणम् ॥

(Original creation, dissolution re-creation, the Manvantaras, ancient genealogies and accounts of persons mentioned in the genealogies). Even this fivefold division was gradually nullified by later augmentations which increased the bulk of the Purana still more and this metamorphosed condition is not even

the shadow of the original Purana. It became in the end a treatise replete with doctrinal and ritual matter, interspersed with fanciful stories and incredible mythological tales.

Now Pargiter contends that "Itihasas appear to have remained distinct for some time, and Linga I, 26, 28, mentions the 'Saiva' as one; but afterwards they would seem to have become absorbed into the Puranas." But the reverse seems to be the case when the general tendency of the Puranas seems to drop off the historical element in them along with the progress of time. Still more the conclusion appears unwarranted, as our ancient authorities assure us of the existence of the 'Itihasa' as a separate ancient lore down to the time of Kautilya. The facts collected after a comparative study of the contents of the 'Puranas' and 'Itihasa' force on us the conclusion otherwise, and the historical elements that were thus left to themselves, out of the Puranas, were transposed to new surroundings and were largely utilised by Veda Vyasa in the composition of the great Mahabharata. "The early Vedic texts no doubt make no reference to the Mahabharata but they mention 'Itihasas' (Atharva Veda, XV. 6. 11-12). It is well-known that the story recited by Vaisampayana to Janamejaya was at first called an Itihasa and was named 'Jaya' or Victory, i. e., victory of the Pandus, the ancestors of the king' (Political History of Ancient India, by Ray Chowdhury) :

मुच्यते सर्वपापेभ्यो राहुना चन्द्रमा यया ।

जयो नामेतिहासोऽयं श्रोतव्यो विजिगीषुणा ॥

Adi 62. 20).

The Mahabharata has justly been regarded as a tale of victory and herein do we find its secularised character. The gradual modernisation of the func-

tion of the historian was brought to bear on the composition of the Mahabharata by Vyasa who incorporated into it the true historical elements gleaned from the Puranas and other sources that were available through tradition. The original Purana (ancient history) comprised of descriptions of various dynasties of kings who parcelled out and ruled India of the Vedic period; and the Mahabharata, in addition to these descriptions of dynasties, reviews in illustrative accounts the survival of a spiritual nation on the pivotal occurrence of the Great Bharata War. These wars of ancient India have a deep national significance to elucidate but space forbids us to do so.

The "जयो नमेतिहासोऽयं" in the couplet is suggestive of a deep meaning and one is likely to interpret it in a too literal sense only to indicate the connection with the context. But that the story of the Mahabharata was called an 'Itihasa,' and was named 'Jaya' simply because ultimately it led to victory on the side of the Pandavas, as has been suggested by Mr. Ray Chowdhury, does not appeal to thinking minds for obvious reasons. The whole history of Aryan Civilisation is a vindication of spirit over matter and here we cannot but emphasise Yashka's opinion that he who interprets the Veda with reference to traditional history, is a true historian of Indian ideals. 'Itihasas' are illustrative of Vedic ideals. Our history demonstrates to mankind that Vedic teachings are not mere abstractions; that here in India alone, of all countries in the world, "philosophy and religion are one." The history of India is to be sought not in the clash of swords and diplomatic intrigues, not in the achievement of a well-balanced ad-

ministrative machinery and factional party politics;—these only create misty puzzles in the vision of those who seek acquaintance with the real India; these are only accretions formed on this age-worn frame-work to suggest to the perverted thinkers of Modern India, the path of deviation.

The true India has its birth out of the fire of sacrifice, lit up, in the hoary antiquity, on the banks of the Drishtadvati and Saraswati; and the flame that burned bright thereon gradually swelled in volume and increased in force and radiance as the ages rolled on. Her history is to be traced in the searchlight of the transcendental vision of the Rishis and the purgatory mission of the Avatars. India, the real India that is to be revealed to the vision of the historian, is the India of Rishis like Vasishtha and Viswamitra, Vyasa and Valmiki, the India of Sri Ramachandra and Sri Krishna, of Buddha and Sankara, of Sri Chaitanya and Ramakrishna.

Such an Itihasa do we discover in the Mahabharata and such an "Aitihasik" do we find in Bhagawan Krishna Dwaipayana Vyasa, and such an 'Itihasa' has been truly regarded as the fifth Veda of the Hindus. The Mahabharata is, indeed, the dictionary of Indian ideals,—nay, of all human ideals, religious, philosophical, literary, artistic, social, political, and cosmological and what not. Men in every sphere of life have derived inspiration from this encyclopaedic treatise. A portion of this sums up the Hindu philosophy in a nutshell. We mean, the Gita which has been very aptly described by the great Swami Vivekananda as the divine commentary on the Upanishads; and the Mahabharata contains facts and historical figures that lead to the belief in the existence of the Upanishadic

ideals as dominating factors in the lives of the men of those days. Not only that. It is an unflinching testimony to how a nation as a whole could move on a spiritual plane to perfection even in details. War, with all its horrors, calling forth the most brutal instincts of men, could, under the very shadow of this ideal, exhibit the most humanising force of peace. The whole of this brilliant work in plain language, is the faithful representation of the dynamic Hindu Society of Ancient India, the revival of which was so much desired by the great Swami in the static condition of the Hindu Society of Modern India. Nurtured on the Vedic ideals, each was a living force in his sphere,—the saint, the philosopher, the poet, the captain and the soldier, the Guru and

the disciple, the father and the mother, the husband and the wife, the son and the daughter, the master and the servant.

Equipped with all these references the Mahabharata claims equality with the Vedas, and our forefathers cannot be accused of mis-statement or exaggeration if they declared it to be the chief of all Shastras outweighing even the four Vedas. Not only that, it presumes to bestow salvation upon those who regularly and devoutly culture the study of its valuable contents.

We therefore reverently bow to this Itihāsa-Veda of the Hindus and the fifth Veda of the Aryans and also to the Mahamuni Vyasa, the sage-author of this grandest treatise on history.

## GOD IN DIFFERENT SCHOOLS OF VEDĀNTA

*By Sridhar Majumdar, M. A.*

IT is extremely difficult, rather impossible, for the finite individual soul, to get all at once a clear conception of the Infinite Universal Soul, Brahman; and more so, to express it in adequate words. Different commentators of Brahma-Sutra seem to have given apparently different versions of the status of Brahman; but they have all based their conclusions on the authority of Sruti which is the outcome of direct intuition of the seers of old called Rishis. To doubt any of these conclusions is to doubt Sruti itself, which is regarded as sacrilege by the wise, as Sruti is the corroborated testimony of the results of intuition of different seers, attained by each in course of independent thinking and practice. These differences will vanish if we remember the memorable couplet

of Sruti: "Who is incomprehensible, unspeakable, infinite in form, all-peace immortal, the parent of the universe, without rival, all-pervading, all-conscience, all-bliss, invisible and inscrutable" (Kaivalyopanishad, Part I, 6). Each commentator has given a partial view of Brahman as revealed to him. But it will not be doing equal justice to all the commentators to say that the version of one commentator truly represents the Infinite Brahman in its entirety, while those of the rest are wrong; as this will be questioning the validity of Sruti which is based on well founded intuitions of the seers of old. This direct intuition of the seers regarding the Infinite Spirit in the spiritual field, has the same force as the result of practical experiment regarding the natural science; the only difference

being that the former which is called revelation, is not tainted with error. So the true view of Brahman, the Infinite Spirit, is, for the reasons stated above, an adjustment of all the views of the different commentators and something more incomprehensible, unspeakable and inscrutable.

Illustrious Sankara in his theory of absolute monism, has taken Brahman in *Its transcendent aspect which is the grandest idea teaching us to be regardless of the manifested universe which is but an insignificant part of Brahman in comparison with Its unmanifested portion* (vide Chhandogya Upanishad, Chap. III, xii, 6). Devotional Ramanuja, in his theory of qualified monism, has taken Brahman in *Its immanent aspect, as being the soul of the universe with which we are primarily concerned* (vide Mundaka, Chap. II, i, 4). Strongly pious Madhva, in his theory of dualism, has taken Brahman in the light of the Creator, and the manifested things as created beings, which is also relatively true. Well composed and peaceful Nimbarka, without any quarrel with any other commentator, has in his theory of monism standing side by side with dualism (Dvaitadvaita), taken Brahman in *Its absolute as well as relative aspects as through different prospectives*.

All these revered commentators stand on the authority of Vedanta. We should humbly bow down to them all and maintain that all these different versions about the nature of Brahman, the Infinite Spirit, are perfectly true as they are equally weighty and as Brahman, according to Sruti, can only be apprehended and not comprehended. Though these versions may appear conflicting to us in our limited knowledge, they are equally applicable, in their entirety, to Brahman, unlimited in time, space and causation.

Vedanta has no quarrel with any religion whatsoever; it inculcates the idea of that universal religion which is the fountain-head of all the religions of the world.

It is not possible for every individual soul to have a glimpse at once of the Infinite Universal Soul. Vedanta, therefore, prescribes stages to be pursued step by step, beginning from dualism and ending in all-embracing monism. Even in dualism, Vedanta does not disagree when different processes are taken up for the cultivation of devotion and the worship of God in the light of the father, the mother, or the most intimate friend, to suit one's own nature and capacity, as in every process the ultimate goal is the realisation of Brahman, the Infinite Spirit.

# AN EXPOSITION OF TANTRA SASTRA

By Thakur Brajmohan Singh, B.A. Bar-At-Law

## The Tantra, Its Meaning and Derivation

'**TANTRA**' means according to its derivation (तनोति तन्यते इति वा । तन्यते विस्तार्यते ज्ञानं अनेन इति तन्त्रम्) a system which tends to develop or expand knowledge. Again 'तनोति विपुलानर्थान् तत्त्वमन्त्रसमिन्वितान् वाणञ्च कुरुते यस्मात् तन्त्रमित्यभिधीयते ॥" When rendered freely, it means this:—That body of religious scriptures is called 'Tantra' which, while explaining "in extenso" all about the meaning or utility of the Tattwas and Mantras, protects one from evils or pains of worldly kind. It is indeed difficult to define the word "Tantra" in a strictly logical sense. Briefly speaking, the Tantra Sastra is a practical system of religious worship fundamentally based on the monistic doctrine and extracted from the Vedas\* with such modifications and improvements as to suit men born in 'Kali-yuga' or Iron Age, as alluded to above. Instances could be multiplied to show that the basic principle of the Tantras is the Vedantic Advaitavada.

6. Cf. Kularnava Tantra, Mahanirvana Tantra and Saktisangama Tantra, e.g.

अस्ति देवी परब्रह्मस्वरूपी निष्कलः शिवः ।

सर्वज्ञः सर्वकर्ता च सर्वेशो निर्मलोदयः ॥

सर्वशक्तिस्वरूपात्वं सर्वदेवमयी तनुः (कुलार्णव तंत्र)

त्वमेव सूक्ष्मा स्थूला त्वं व्यक्ताव्यक्तस्वरूपिणी ।

निराकाराऽपि साकारा कस्त्वां वेदितुमर्हति ॥

(महानिर्वाण तंत्र)

सर्वाद्या तु भवेच्छक्तिरानन्दघनगोचरा ।

ब्रह्मरूपचिदानन्दा परब्रह्मैव केवलम् ॥

(शक्ति संगम तंत्र)

## The Shaktivada of Tantras and its relation with Vedantic Monism and Sankhya's Dualism

Let us now examine the Tantrik doctrine in the light of the teachings of Mayavada Vedanta. Sankara, the greatest exponent of this school of Advaita philosophy, admits of one and only one single real principle, namely Brahman or Satchidananda (Being, Consciousness and Bliss), and rejects Nature as mere illusion. All is no other than Brahman or Spirit (सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म). This is indeed a very bold stand which Sankara takes and has to be reconciled with our practical experience of the world. We need not enter here into all the wealth of argumentative tangle which the author has so admirably spun out to make his position impreguably secure. But a word or two may be found necessary to explain the true nature of his line of discussion. When he says Nature or world is illusion, he means that behind the background of this seeming real world of "Names and Forms" (नाम-रूप) which is constantly changing into one or the other forms of life, growth and decay, or the cycle of creation, existence and destruction (सृष्टि-स्थिति-प्रलय), there is one immutable eternal principle which is called 'Brahman' or, as Kant says "the thing in itself," both the efficient and material cause of the whole

\* Spinoza's 'Substantia' approximately approaches the idea of Brahman. (See The History of Philosophy by George Henry Lewes, Vol. II Second Epoch, Ch. I.)

universe". To grasp the significance of the idea of world illusion, we must bear in mind that Sankara does not deny the existence of Nature as it is perceived by us through our senses now in one form, then in another. But what he terms illusion is the form or forms in which one single unitary Entity through its own inherent indefinable and inexplicable mysterious power (माया), manifests itself in numberless ways. For instance, snow, waves, eddies and bubbles are but different names and forms of one single substance, water<sup>9</sup>. They, no doubt, do exist as such, because we can perceive them; but what is actually pointed out is that they are destructible and must ultimately perish—though there is really nothing, as the Hindu philosophy holds, which can really perish or cease to exist in some shape or another, be it coarse or fine, visible or invisible<sup>10</sup>. Exist it must, though transformed. All that takes place is the dissolution of the object into its cause. (नाशः कारणालयः सां० सू० १-१२). *e. g.*: Break the earthen pot and it reverts into its causal mate-

<sup>9</sup> *Vide* Sankara Bhashya on the follo w ing Brahma Sutras by Badarayana.

प्रकृतिश्च प्रतिज्ञा दृष्टानुपरोधात् ।

(ब० सू० १-४-२३).

आत्मकृतेः परिणामात् ॥ (१-४-२६).

“शक्तिद्वयवदज्ञानोपहितं चैतन्यं स्वप्रधानतया निमित्तं स्वोपाधिप्रधानतया उपादानञ्च भवति यथा लूता तन्मुक्ताप्यं प्रति स्वप्रधानतया निमित्तं स्व-शरीरप्रधानतयोपादानञ्च भवति—(वेदान्त सार)

9. यथा तरंगकल्लोलैर्जलमेव स्फुरत्यलम् ।

पात्ररूपेण ताम्रं हि ब्रह्माण्डौघैश्चैतयात्मना ।

(शंकर अ० ६३)

दृष्टिर्नाम ब्रह्मरूपे सच्चिदानन्दवस्तुनि अर्धौ फेनादिवत् । सर्वे नामरूपप्रसारणम् ॥

(शंकर० श्री वाक्यसुधा—१५.)

<sup>10</sup> *Cf.* Prof. Haeckel's Riddle of the Universe, Ch. XII-The Law of Substance.

rial, the earth. So, here the material cause of these various forms is water. What really changes is thus the form and not the essence which is water. That is to say, these various phenomena of water, though visible to us, have no permanence or reality in them. There is on the other hand something else real, of permanent value, which gives rise to these appearances. This world, again, Sankara continues, which is described as illusion, is neither real (सत्) nor unreal (असत्). Real it cannot be, because nothing is real except Brahman. And it is also not unreal, as it is a matter of our common and everyday experience. That is, it has no absolute existence apart from Brahman. If it had one, the doctrine of unity would immediately fall to the ground, and could not be successfully maintained any longer. Thus the Vedantist denies the reality of the world as detached from Brahman, *but accepts it in so far as the one is associated with the other which in fact is no other than His own creation*<sup>11</sup>.

What Sankara actually means is, that behind all this endless fleeting diversity with which we are on all sides surrounded in our mundane existence, there is one surviving, unknowable, eternal, real principle which is called

11. यत् परं ब्रह्म सत्त्वात्मा विश्वस्यायतनं महत् ।

सूक्ष्मात् सूक्ष्मतरं नित्यं तत्त्वमेव त्वमेव तत् ॥

(कैवल्योपनिषत् १-१६)

उपादानं प्रपञ्चस्य ब्रह्मणोऽन्यत्र विद्यते ।

तस्मात् सर्वं प्रपञ्चोऽयं ब्रह्मैवास्ति न चैतरत् ।

(शंकर० अ० ४५)

श्रुत्वानिवारितं नूनं नानात्वं स्वमुखेन हि ।

कथं भासो भवेदन्यः स्थिते चाद्वयकारणे ॥

(शंकर० अ० ४७)

Also see The Vedanta Philosophy by Prof. Maxmuller and The Science, and Philosophy of Religion by Swami Vivekananda.

Brahman. Notwithstanding all this changing variety, He, though pervading all, remains ever the same, one unchanging everlasting whole Entity. Then what is it that gives us the conception of reality in reference to objects of Nature? The Vedanta says that it is Adhyasam (अध्यासम्), or 'विपरित भावना'<sup>13</sup> that is, a process of superimposition of the qualities of the real (God) upon what is unreal or false (Nature) e.g., mistaking a rope for a serpent<sup>14</sup>. In other words, it is to have an idea of a certain thing which is different from what it really is. Here we attribute the qualities of a serpent to a rope. Now, Sankara says that this is due to nescience (अविद्या). The vast range of Sankara's philosophical discourse is directed to annihilate this ignorance and to establish the knowledge of one eternal truth in its place<sup>15</sup>. The kernel of the whole mass of Sankara's teachings has been said to be this:—The world is a myth, the only reality is God, and the embodied soul is no other than Brahman Himself (ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः)<sup>16</sup>. To simplify it further it comes to a sentence of three words viz., Thou art

<sup>13</sup> See Sankara's introduction to Brahma Sutras.

See also Panchadashī.

13. असर्पभूते रजौ सर्पारोपवत् वस्तुन्यवस्त्वारोपः अध्यारोपः॥ वस्तु—सच्चिदानन्दमद्वयं ब्रह्म । अवस्तु—अज्ञानादि सकलजडसमूहः (वेदान्तसार)

14. तदैक्यप्रमेयगताज्ञाननिवृत्तिः । स्वस्वरूपानन्दावाप्तिश्च ॥ (वेदान्तसार)

15. रज्जुरूपे परिज्ञाते सर्पस्वरूपं न तिष्ठति । अधिष्ठाने तथा ज्ञाते प्रपञ्चः शून्यतां गतः ॥

(शं० अपरोक्षानुभूति ८६)

यथा रज्जुं परित्यज्य सर्पं गृह्णाति वै भ्रमात् ।

तद्वत्सत्यमविज्ञाय जगत्प्रपञ्चमिदं मूढधीः ॥

(शं० अप० ८५).

That (तत्त्वमसि). From this we come to the conclusion that things are not what they appear to be, but are something else in reality. The modern scientists are discovering the same truth today. In his "Creation as explained in the Tantras," Sir John Woodroffe, an eminent orientalist, writes : "Again, however real it may seem to us, the world is unreal in the sense that it is something other than what it seems to be. This thing which I now hold in my hands seems to me to be paper which is white, smooth and so forth, yet we are told that it really is something different, namely a number of extraordinary rapid vibrations of etheric substance producing the false appearance of scientific "Matter".

#### The Tantravada

At this stage the 'Tantravadin' steps in and offers an alternative doctrine which maintains the reality of Nature without destroying the unity of Brahman. This he achieves in the following way:—One Brahman or Satohidananda or Paramashiva has two phases. In one He represents the immutable, unmanifest, transcendent, consciousness (चित्) principle, while in the other He appears as a changing immanent, phenomenal Entity—the source of all creation, and as creation itself. The former is called 'Shiva, and the latter Shakti—though both are one and indivisibly associated with each other like the two sections of a seed of gram inside the crust<sup>16</sup>.

16. This simile occurs in Chhandogya Upanishad.

१. पराशक्तिरूपा चित्तिरेव भगवती शिव भद्राकारामिना (शिवदृष्टि Kashmir Series)

२. न शिवः शक्तिरहितः न शक्तिर्व्यतिरेकिणी ॥

३. न शिवेन विना देवी न देव्या च विना शिवः ।

नानयोरन्तरं किञ्चिच्चन्द्रचन्द्रिकयोरिव ॥

(कुलार्थव तंत्र)

That is to say, both really constitute one entire body. They are eternally and inseparably co-existent. Separation, impossible as it is, means destruction of its wholeness. They are like two phases of one single picture. The androgynous (अर्द्धनारीश्वर) incarnation of Lord Shiva, in which He appears both as male and female in one body, is the best illustration on this point. From one side of the figure he appears as male, and from the other as female—though, really speaking, He has no sex in the absolute sense. Thus the two principles are closely and inseparably incorporated in one single substance—the primordial cause of the whole universe. This is the keystone of the whole of cosmic architecture. Besides, it gives an important clue to unravel the mystery of the whole creation, which is now borne out by results obtained by modern scientific investigations. An eminent scientist, namely, William Halcombe, M.D., says : "Binary causes lie at the bottom of all things. The sun and moon cast their light upon us. The rain falls, the waves roll, the spheres preserve their rotundity and persevere in their motions,—all are the results of underlying dual forces. Every human being, man or woman, is like the Lord Himself, in a certain sense bi-sexual, having both masculine and feminine qualities, which are to be blended or equilibrated in a spiritual marriage which is generation. This spiritual duality of each individual is represented in the physical duality of the human body. It is composed of two similar halves united at the meridian line, which are positive and negative, or male and female in relation to each other. The entire brain, the nervous system with their wonderful appendage of muscles and bones, are peculiarly alike on both sides of the

body. We have two eyes, two hands, two feet, two breasts and when apparently there is one organ as the nose or mouth, it is composed of two halves, peculiarly alike and accurately adjusted or married to each other. There are other marriages also in the body between organ and organ, between function and function, between nervous fluid and the blood, etc. etc. The crowning act of Divine glory was the production of two bodies, that is, the natural body and the spiritual body." The Tantrik view of creation, again, is that the world evolves *from one single source*, namely Satchidananda *by division*<sup>17</sup> first. The same truth has been demonstrated by one of the great scientists of modern age, namely the late Edward Carpenter who in his "Drama of Love and Death," says: "The Protozoa, those earliest cells, the progenitors of the whole animal and vegetable kingdom, grow by feeding on the minute particles which they find in the fluid surrounding them. The growth continues till ultimately reaching the limit of convenient size, *a cell divides into two* or more portions and reproduces itself. The descendent cells or portions so thrown off are simply continuation by division of the life of the original cell so that it has often been said that, in a sense, these protozoa are immortal, since their life continues indefinitely (with branching but without break) from generation to generation. This form of reproduction by simple budding or *division* extends even up into the higher types

17. In Chhandogya Upanishad we find the first traces of this idea of *creation by division*. See also Brihadaranyaka Upanishad I-iv-3 and also Chapters 5 and 9 of the Riddle of the Universe by Prof. Ernest Haeckel.

सच्चिदानन्दविभवात् सकलात् परमेश्वरात् ।

आसीच्छक्तिस्ततो नादो मादाद्बिन्दुसमुद्भवः ॥

(शारदातिलक)

of life....It is a kind of virgin birth and is well illustrated in the vegetable birth by the budding of bulbs and by the fact that a twig torn from a shrub and placed in the ground will commonly grow and continue the life of the parent plant; or in the lower stages of the animal world, where among many of the worms, insects, sponges etc., the life may simply be continued by division without any sexual contact or sex action whatever. This seems in fact to be the original and primitive form of generation." Then again, he continues, "The mystical conception as old as Plato, of the male and the female as representing respectively the two halves of a complete being, turns out to be no poetic metaphor." (The italics are mine).

Now, again, as explained before, the transcendental static aspect of the Lord

which is beyond time, space and causation, is termed Shiva or Paramashiva; while the power of manifestation of the same Shiva is called Shakti.<sup>16</sup> This is His active or creative principle through which He unfolds Himself in the form of the Universe. Thus Shiva is the same as His Power, the Shakti, as the Shakta doctrine does not differentiate between Shakti and Shaktiman, Power and the Possessor of Power.

18. परमशिवः—केवल शिव पदवाच्यः ।

(परशुरामकल्प सूत्र ४)

Cf. अनुत्तरप्रकाशपञ्चाशिका by Adyanath, Kashmir Series and कामकलाविलास २.

Cf. also स्वयंप्रकाशरूपः परमेश्वरः ।

(पराप्रवेशिका Kashmir Series)

(To be continued)

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

III. Advaita Prakarana

### Gaudapada's Karika

**T**HE Jiva who has taken refuge in devotion (or worship) is engaged in (worshipping) conditioned (evolved) Brahman, believing that before creation, everything was in an unmanifested condition. Therefore he is said to be of a mediocre (or low) intellect. (1)

### Sankara's Commentary

While explaining the Om, it has been said in the form of a proposition that Atman (is of the nature of) the absence of the phenomenal world;

auspiciousness and non-duality; and "when known, duality is not seen." There and in the Vaitathya Prakarana, the absence of duality has been established, by means of examples (illustrations) such as dreams, superimposition and castles in the air and by logic appealing to the reason, that what appears (phenomenon) has a beginning and an end. To the question whether non-duality is established only on the authority of (Vedas or Sruti) or can be established through logic (reason) also, we reply that it can be done by logic (reason) also. To explain the manner in which it can be done,

the present (Ādvalta) chapter is begun. It has been demonstrated in the last chapter that all the differentiations into an object fit for worship (devotion), worship and other things are false and that the only non-dual Atman is the reality. Such people as take refuge in devotion (worship), hold that worship (of a personal God) is the means for attaining liberation (Moksha). They reason as follows : "I am a worshipper. Brahman is that which is fit to be worshipped by me. By worshipping the conditioned Brahman (that is, manifested as this world), I shall attain to the unconditioned Brahman, when I give up this present body. Before creation, all this (manifested world) and myself, formed the unmanifested Brahman. By worship (devotion), I shall attain to that very Brahman of whose nature I partook before creation and in whom I am living at present in this manifested condition." As the Jiva taking refuge in the worship of conditioned Brahman knows only the lower Brahman, the great souls who know the unborn Brahman, call him a man of mediocre (low or limited) intellect. The Keno-panishad says in support of this, "Know that to be Brahman, which cannot be described in words and from which all words arise. That which is worshipped is not Brahman."

*Gaudapada's Karika*

Therefore, I shall describe that unlimited, unborn and homogeneous (Brahman) which though appearing to be born (as the manifested universe) is ever unborn and unaffected (by the manifestations). (2)

*Sankara's Commentary*

We have already described him as of limited intellect, who being through wrong knowledge, incapable of rea-

lising the unborn Atman present both without and within, thinks himself (that is, his own Atman) to be an inferior being, thinks that he is born, and is existing in the born and manifested Brahman and that through a course of worship (devotion) he would in the end attain Brahman. Now therefore, we shall describe the limitless and unborn Brahman. As the Oh. Up. says, the limitedness arises "when one sees another, one hears another, one knows another", (that limitation leads to) "inferiority, liability to destruction and to being unreal." "(Phenomenal) modifications are mere names, expressed in words." As opposed to this, Brahman which is unborn and present without and within and known as Bhooma, is devoid of limitation. In other words, we shall describe that limitless Brahman realising whom, there is an end to all limitations created by Avidya (ignorance). It is unborn, that is, it knows no birth. It is also homogeneous. (If you ask) how, (we reply that) there is no differentiation into parts, large or small. When a substance has parts, it shows differentiation into large and small and it is spoken of as being subject to birth. But this Brahman being without parts, and being homogeneous, cannot show any unevenness through differentiations. Therefore, it is unborn and without any limitations and ever homogeneous. Brahman has not the least trace of birth or unevenness (that is heterogeneity) anywhere and though like the rope-snake, it appears to be born from the point of view of Avidya (ignorance), it is always and everywhere unborn Brahman. Listen to the manner of it now to be described.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

The (Parama) Atman may be said to be born as Jiva (Atmans),

just as the Akasa (space or ether) may be said to form different spaces enclosed in jars. Just as the jars are (formed from Vayu, Tejas, Ap, and Prithvi evolved from) space (Akasa), so are the combinations (of the five elements giving rise to the bodies) (superimpositions on Paramatman). This is the illustration regarding birth. (3)

*Sankara's Commentary*

We have stated our resolve to describe the unborn and limitless Brahman. We proceed to give effect to it by means of reason and illustration. The Atman is supreme (Paramatman) as it is like Akasa (space) very subtle and without parts and all-pervading. Just as the spaces enclosed in the jars are the (unenclosed) Akasa, so the Jivas or Kshetragnas (knowers of Kshetra or body) form the (Parama) Atman, (unlimited by the bodies). Thus the Paramatman is likened to Akasa. This is also open to another interpretation. Just as Akasa may be said to be born in the form of Akasas enclosed in the jars, so Paramatman may be said to be born in the form of Jivatmans (limited by bodies). The origin of Jivatmans from Paramatman referred to in the Vedanta Sutra, is similar to the origin of Akasas enclosed in jars, from the great Akasa (unenclosed). What is meant is that there is no such thing as real birth. Just as from (the evolution of) Akasa, jars arise, so from Paramatman may be said to arise the various elementals such as earth, etc., and combinations of these elementals

forming the sensory organs and bodies, in the same way that a snake may be said to arise from a rope (that is to say, the elementals, bodies, Jivas, etc., are superimposed on Paramatman in the same way that a snake is superimposed on a rope. There is no true birth. Therefore Atman is said to be born from the combinations of elementals, just like the jars, etc., (from Akasa). So, for the instruction of dull-witted persons, wherever the Srutis (scriptures) refer to the birth of Jivatmans from Paramatman, it should be understood in the same sense as in the illustration. That is to say, in the same way that Akasas enclosed in jars may be said to have their birth in unlimited Akasa (called Mahakasa).

*Gaudapada's Karika*

On the disappearance of jars (that is, when they cease to be jars on being broken to pieces) the enclosed Akasa becomes one with Mahakasa. Similarly, Jivatmans become one with Paramatman (when the bodies disappear, that is, undergo dissolution). (4)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Just as when the jars are formed, the Akasa enclosed in them may be said to be born, and when they disappear, the enclosed spaces become one with the Mahakasa; similarly, when the combinations of elementals form bodies, etc., the Jivatmans may be said to be born and on the dissolution (of bodies), the Jivatmans become one with Paramatman. The meaning is that really there is no (birth or dissolution of Jivas).

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**YOGIC PHYSICAL CULTURE:** By S. Sundaram, published by Gurukul Ashrama, Kengeri, Bangalore. Second Edition.

Yogic Asanas are fast becoming popular and the author has brought out another edition of his book with some improvements and alterations. Special reference has now been made to the exercises that women are to take normally and also under conditions of pregnancy etc. A chart showing all the various poses in a slightly altered order

and omitting one or two postures has been got up. The author has given cautions enough; yet instances are known to us where beginners selected a posture or two only and made the mistake of overdoing them for about half an hour without break or interval, attempted what *they* considered to be Pranayama in addition, during the poses, and naturally got into troubles for their imprudence. We wish to draw *special attention* of purchasers of the book to *all* the rules given by the author.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### R. K. Mission Students' Home, Madras

The Home has sustained an irreparable loss by the demise of Mr. C. Ramaswamy Iyengar, who acted as the Secretary from the day of its foundation in 1905 to the day of his death in 1932. By his selfless work, peerless devotion and unceasing labour, he was able to overcome all adverse circumstances and bring this unique type of educational institution to its present state of development.

The 28th annual report of the Home just issued by the management shows how the institution has been able to maintain its high standard of efficiency which continues to attract the attention of many eminent educationists. The work has been extended by the starting of a branch Secondary School at Mambalam for the benefit of the pupils of that locality. The initial expenditure of Rs. 893-12-0 was subscribed by the residents of the place. During the year under report there were 141 boys on the rolls, 36 belonging to the Lower Secondary, 67 to the High School, 20 to the Industrial Section and 18 to the College courses. The results of the various University examinations show that the Home acquitted itself creditably during the year.

It is gratifying to see that one of its old boys was awarded the PH. D. Degree of the Madras University, and that another was granted the Tata scholarship for special study in Botany in England. One student passed M.A. in Economics and two got Honours in B.A. The Industrial School students numbering 6 completed their course and qualified themselves in Mechanical Engineering. The attention of the authorities has been directed not so much to prepare boys for examinations as towards the formation of their character by placing before them the Gurukul ideal. The physical training and games; opportunities to come in contact with the outside world and develop a sense of uprightness and fairness; the moral and religious instruction from scriptures such as Gita and Upanishads; management of household affairs and garden work; social activities like lantern lectures to the illiterate masses on subjects of health, hygiene and sanitation; the starting of a Study Circle to create a general interest; the organising of a Seva Sangham and a Boys' Court among students—all these help, to a large extent, in bringing out their latent faculties and instilling into them the habit of self-reliance, service and sacrifice.

During the year under review the Permanent Fund has been increased to Rs. 2,06,057-9-0, of which Rs. 10,953-1-0 was contributed by the Madras Secretariat Party. The construction of the Jubilee workshop was completed at a total cost of Rs. 37,000-0-0. The Home had the benefit of a free and generous gift of 125 acres of wet land and 15 acres of dry land with a house in the district of Chingleput, valued at about Rs. 20,000 from Mr. R. Venkata Varada Iyengar. The strength of the Library has been increased by new additions, bringing the total to 12784. The issue of 2815 copies from the general and school libraries indicates a large use of the books by the students during the year. Funds are badly needed for the construction of a separate dormitory for the Industrial Section boys, for the perpetuation of the memory of the late Secretary, and for the improvements of the different sections. The management hopes that the generous public who, by their support, have enabled the institution to attain such a present state of development, will come forward with liberal contributions and ensure the permanence of its noble work.

### Birthday Celebration of Swami Vivekananda Madras

The public celebration of Swami Vivekananda's 71st Birthday came off in Madras on the 29th January, 1933. The hall of the R. K. Math was tastefully decorated and Swamiji's photo was installed on an elevated platform. Bhajana parties sang devotional songs during the whole of the forenoon. Meanwhile in the premises of the Students' Home nearly 2,000 Daridra Narayanas were served with a sumptuous meal. At 2 P.M., Mr. Murti Rao Bhagavathar of Saidapet gave a Katha Kalakshepam on Kabirdas. This was followed by a public meeting. Mr. N. Subramaniam, B.A., L.T., of the Students' Home delivered a speech in Tamil on the Life and Teachings of Swamiji, showing throughout the similarity between the utterances of the Swami and the words of the ancient seers recorded in Sanskrit as well as Tamil religious literature. Rao Baha-

dur V. N. Viswanatha Rao, Secretary to Government, Law and Education Dept., put "The Old Light and the New" as the title of his lecture and explained the teachings of the Swami whom he styled as a "conservative progressivist". Both the lecturer and the President, Sir K. V. Reddy, discussed the Swami's views on the question of caste, and the latter wound up with a passionate appeal for the removal of the invidious distinctions of touchable and untouchable of the present day. The usual vote of thanks followed and with Mangalarathi and distribution of Prasad, the function came to a close.

### Bombay

The Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated with great eclat at the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Bombay. The programme included Bhajana, Pravachan and Seva of Daridra Narayanas. A public meeting was held at Blavatsky Hall, with Dewan Bahadur K. M. Jhaveri, Ex-Judge of Bombay High Court, in the chair. Mr. K. Natarajan, Mr. F. J. Ginwalla and Swami Viswananda addressed the meeting. In response to an invitation from the Vivekananda Sangha of Kolhapur, Swami Gunatitananda of Bombay Math, went over there and delivered a series of lectures. The Vivekananda Society, Poona, also observed the day.

### Colombo

The 71st Birthday Anniversary of the Swami was publicly celebrated on 5th Feb. in the newly built R. K. Mission School Hall, Wellawatte, Colombo. A whole day programme was observed. The function began with a Puja at the Ashrama after which there was devotional music. Distribution of Prasad took place at 11 A. M. From 5 to 6 P. M. a religious concert was given by the Ananda Samaj of Colombo. After the concert a public meeting was held with Mr. S. W. Laksanaike, Member of the State Council, in the chair. The speakers were Pandit M. Nallathamby (in Tamil), Mr. L. H. Mettananda, Principal of the Ananda College (in English), and Mrs. N. P. Pillai, M. A.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman".

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

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VOL. XIX]

APRIL, 1933

[No. 12

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## HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

त्रयो धर्मस्कन्धा यज्ञोऽध्ययनं दानमिति प्रथमः ।  
तप एव द्वितीयः, ब्रह्मचारी तृतीयः ।  
दाम्भ्यत दत्त दमश्चम् इति । तदेतत् त्रयं शिक्षेद्  
दमं दानं दयाम् इति ।  
तमेतं वेदानुवचनेन ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति  
यज्ञेन दानेन तपसाऽनाशकेन ॥

There are three branches of Dharma. The first is sacrifice, study and charity; the second austerity; the third continence.

Subdue the senses, give alms, be compassionate. Learn these three—control of the senses, charity and compassion.

Those who follow the path of Brahman desire to realise Him—the Supreme Spirit—by studying the Vedas, by performing sacrifices, by giving alms, by religious austerities and by unselfish deeds.

THE UPANISHADS

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

(Continued from page 405)

### *Nature of Sri Ramakrishna's Mind, as described by Himself*

ON many occasions Sri Ramakrishna himself told us: "The natural tendency of this (my) mind is upwards (towards the Nirvikalpa state). Once that state is reached, it does not like to come down. For your sake I drag it down perforce. Downward pull is not strong enough without a lower desire. So I create some trifling desires, such as, for instance, for smoking, for drinking water, for tasting a particular dish or for seeing a particular person, and repeatedly suggest them to my mind. Then alone the mind slowly comes down (to the body). Again, while coming down, it may run back to the upward course. Again it has to be dragged down through such desires". A wonderful state of mind indeed! While listening to this, we used to sit dumbfounded and think that if this was the meaning of the saying, "Keep secure the knowledge of non-duality in your pocket first, and then do whatever you like", then such achievement was simply impossible in our lives. The only course left to us was complete resignation. But in that also, after some time we met with extreme difficulty. For the evil mind would

sometimes remark, "Why is it that Sri Ramakrishna does not love me most? Why should he not love me as much as he loves Narendranath (Vivekananda)? In which respect am I inferior to him?" and so on!

Leaving aside this digression, let us now follow our original topic.

### *Physical Changes due to Mental States. Eastern and Western Views*

After a brief exposition of the higher forms of ecstasy and Samadhi in so far as we have understood them from the words of the Master, we shall try to explain the state of 'Bhavamukha.' It has already been pointed out that any kind of thought, high or low, that occurs in the mind is necessarily followed by some form of physical change or other. This is a fact of daily experience and hardly requires an explanation. It can be easily understood by observing how physical changes take place in a person under the influence of different emotions such as anger, love, etc. Predominant thoughts, good or evil, affect the physical appearance to such a great extent that a man's character can be fairly guessed from his mere look. Hence it is that people very often remark,—'The very appearance of such and such a person shows that he is of fiery or

lustful or saintly temperament.' Many of us may have experienced how the devil-like, horrible appearance of a man of bad character undergoes remarkable change if he takes a new turn and lives continually for six months in good thoughts. Gradually his features become more softened and his gait more straight. According to Western physiology, every thought that comes to the mind leaves for ever its impress in the brain. A man's character, good or bad, is solely determined by the sum total of these impressions. Sages of the East, and specially those of India, say that the good and evil thoughts do not merely leave their impressions on the brain and end there, but are transformed into subtle motive energy which can actuate the soul to do good or evil in later life. This energy accumulated through all the numerous births, resides for ever in 'Muladhara', the lowermost centre of consciousness in the spinal column. It is destroyed only by God-realisation or by attaining the Nirvikalpa (non-dual) state. Otherwise the soul, while migrating from one body to another, has to carry with it this bundle of impressions 'like wind carrying odours from their sources.'

#### *The Relation of Body and Mind*

The close relation of body and mind, as described above, persists till the realisation of God or the attainment of the knowledge of 'Non-duality'. The affections of the mind are transmitted to the

body and *vice versa*. Again, in the totality of the human species the relation of body and mind obtains in the same way as in the individuals. The action and reaction of your body and mind pass on to those of mine and of all others. Thus an eternal relation of mutual interaction exists between the worlds, gross and subtle, internal and external. That is why where others are in mourning your mind also becomes gloomy; where others are full of devotion the same feeling arises spontaneously in your mind also. This principle holds good in other matters as well.

*Thoughts are Contagious. Hence the Need for Good Company*

That is why mental as well as physical states of one person are found to affect those of others according to their constitution. Hence it is that good company has been so highly recommended by the scriptures as a means of attaining love of God. So the Master used to ask his new acquaintances—"Do come here often. In the beginning frequent visits are necessary," and so on.

#### *Physical Changes due to One-pointed Thoughts*

Intense one-pointed love of God, like all other thoughts, brings about unusual changes in the body. For instance, with the appearance of such intense devotion, the devotee feels his attraction towards sense objects gradually flagging. The quantity of food and the period of sleep decrease

gradually day by day; he eats and sleeps less and develops liking for certain kinds of food and dislike for certain others. He also wants to avoid his wife and children and other worldly relations as one avoids poison. The Master used to describe, "I could not bear the company of worldly persons. In the presence of relations I would feel suffocated, life would go out of the body as it were," or again, "The vital energy of a devotee who prays to God in right earnest, is sure to run up to the head." etc., etc.

*Harmony of the Paths of Yoga and Bhakti*

Thus it is known that each one of the mental states that arise in

consequence of one's love of God, has some special form of physical manifestation. From the point of view of mind, Vaishnava scriptures have classed these phenomena under five '*Bhavas*' or attitudes towards God, namely, those of devotees, of servants, of friends, of parents and of lovers; while the Yogic scriptures have described the physical changes that follow such mental states in terms of '*Kundalini*' or the Coiling '*Serpent*' (i.e. the vital energy lying potential in the region of the coccyx, and the six *Chakras* or centres of consciousness within the spinal column and the brain.

## AS WE SEE IT

THE following remarks are made in answer to a few points raised by Prof. Surendra Nath Mitra in his article entitled, 'A Point of View—a Reply,' published elsewhere in this issue. The readers may perhaps remember that 'A Point of View' is the title of an editorial note for the month of January. We had therein tried to meet some of the criticisms that Prof. Mitra brought forward in his article on the Gita Ideal of Sannyasa against Sankara's theory of opposition between work and knowledge, of the necessity of Sannyasa and so on. Since Prof. Mitra wanted to restate his position and answer our criticisms, we publish this new article from his pen elsewhere in this issue. In what follows we offer a few remarks on the points newly raised by him.

We first deal with Prof. Mitra's contention that Sankara admits Karma Yoga

to be the direct cause of knowledge. Our position is that Prof. Mitra mis-construes the passages he has quoted from Sankara in support of his own theory, and this, we believe, has happened because he tries to find out meanings for individual passages without taking a synthetic view of them, i.e., in their relation to the general theory that Sankara propounds. Before we give our interpretation of the passages he quotes, we give here two new passages which conclusively show that in Sankara's opinion Karma Yoga is meant *only* for the purification of the mind and for nothing more. Commenting on the Gita Verse V, 10, Sankara remarks: "He places all actions in the Isvara in the faith that 'I do action for His sake as a servant does for the sake of the master'. He has no attachment for the results even though it be Moksha itself. The result of his actions

so done is only purity of mind and nothing more. (केवलं सत्त्वशुद्धिमात्रफलमेव तस्य कर्मणः स्यात् )". And again in his introduction to the 27th and 28th verses of the same chapter he says, "It has been said that the Sannyasins who remain steady in right knowledge obtain instant liberation. And Karma Yoga performed in complete devotion to the Lord and dedicated to Him leads to Moksha step by step; first the purification of the mind, the attainment of knowledge, the renunciation of all Karma, and lastly, Moksha." Sankara's view is quite clear from this. The same is emphasised in the Sutra Bhashya also. We refer the curious reader to the concluding paragraph of Sankara's commentary on Vedanta Sutra, III, 4, 27.

And now, what are we to make of Prof. Mitra's quotations? The last one is evidently an ambiguous passage where no qualification regarding the indirectness of Karma Yoga is stated, probably due to two reasons: firstly, because it is not a place where the comparative value of Karma and Gnana are discussed; and secondly, because it is unnecessary to repeat the qualifications in every place when they have already been clearly expressed elsewhere. Regarding the other two quotations, we cannot agree with Prof. Mitra's interpretations. The first quotation reads as follows, according to the more correct, though not very literal, translation of Mahadev Sastri: "Though it (meaning the Religion of Works) is a means of attaining to the condition of Devas and the like, still when practised in complete devotion to the Lord without regard to (the immediate) results, it conduces to the purity of the mind. The man whose mind is pure is competent to tread the path of knowledge, and to him comes knowledge; and thus (indirectly) the Religion of Works forms also a means to salvation." We wonder how Prof. Mitra selected such a passage, so

unfavourable to his position, as one in support of it. That purity of mind is the direct result of Karma Yoga, that this purity confers on one the competence to tread the path of knowledge, and that this in turn gives rise to complete knowledge is what strikes our mind as the clear meaning of this passage. As for the second quotation, its translation by Mahadev Sastri runs: By means of work dedicated to Iswara, Janaka and the rest attained perfection—perfection meaning either 'purity of mind' or 'the dawn of true knowledge'. Here we are inclined to think that 'the dawn of true knowledge' means only that maturity of mind required for the rise of true knowledge, which is in no way to be distinguished from what is called 'purity of mind. In consistency with the rest of Sankara's writings this is the only meaning that can be understood from it. Moreover, purity of mind and the rise of true knowledge are so proximate to and so intimately connected with each other that a little looseness of language in describing them is quite unavoidable. To give more quotations and interpretations of passages is not a pleasant task in an article of this kind. Even a cursory perusal of Sankara's writings will show that he recognised nothing more than purity of mind (सत्त्वशुद्धि) to be the contribution of Karma Yoga towards the accomplishment of human salvation. By doing so it must not be understood that Sankara in any way minimised the importance of works. Without purity of mind there is no spiritual life, even as there is no solid building without an adequate foundation; and Karma Yoga as the sole means of the production of this purity, occupies a place of first-rate importance in the spiritual discipline inculcated by Sankara. As soon as this purity is attained the mind becomes capable of apprehending the truth embodied in the Vedanta. Sankara only

contends that once this purity is attained, one may dispense with Karma Yoga and pursue the other disciplines that are more directly concerned with knowledge. Certainly when the foundation has been completed, one is expected not to waste any further energy on it, but proceed with the superstructure.

This brings us to the questions raised in regard to what we, in common with Prof. Mitra, consider to be the direct cause of Gnana, namely Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana. We do not think Prof. Mitra is right in calling these a part of Karma Yoga in order to support his theory that the latter is the direct cause of Gnana. We admit Prof. Mitra's contention that all operations, even mental, which involve the use of the will are in a sense actions, but we wish to point out at the same time that all actions cannot be fitted into the scheme of Karma Yoga. Because lying, stealing, etc., are done through human will, can they be included in Karma Yoga? Evidently not, because they are sinful actions. Karma Yoga admits within its domain only such meritorious actions as yield some desirable fruits in this life or in the life to come, but which, when performed in a spirit of dedication to the Lord, will result in the purification of the mind in place of yielding their ordinary fruits. Sinful actions are not of this kind and they are therefore excluded from Karma Yoga. So also, on the other side, there are actions of a higher order, operations which border on Gnana and therefore transcend the field of Karma Yoga. The mental operation consisting of Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana belongs to this category. It does not by its very nature yield any merit or enjoyment in this world or the next, and as such cannot form a part of Karma Yoga. It is not even a Karma of the usual kind, but a means of right knowledge. In its presence all obstructions to the revelation

of one's nature are removed, and simultaneously with this, i. e., in and through this removal, without calling forth any new effort, the true nature of the Self stands revealed. The question of dedication, etc., so essential to Karma Yoga, has no meaning with reference to it. Again this mental operation called Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana constituting the means for attaining Gnana is, in its highest reaches, perfectly indistinguishable from Gnana itself, since in these highest flights of thought the means and the end blend into one. Taken in this light this mental operation, unlike others, cannot even be called an action; for it becomes one with Gnana, and Gnana as shown by Sankara in his elaborate commentary on Vedanta Sutra, I, 1, 4 is no action at all. The purport of his argument is this: An action is dependent entirely on the mind of the doer, in as far as it can be undertaken or avoided by him. It has also no reference to the nature of an existing reality, as for instance the meditation on man and woman as fire in the Chandogya Upanishad. Regarding action, human will and human imagination are therefore the sole deciding factors. Knowledge which springs from the means of right knowledge has, on the other hand, existing things for its object and its nature and content are therefore quite independent of man's imagination or endeavours and of scriptural injunctions. As an illustration we may point out the knowledge of real fire as contrasted with the meditation on fire we referred to above. Moreover in Advaita Vedanta, since knowledge is only the revelation of one's own nature, knowledge and the nature of reality constitute one and the same entity. Its distinction from action is therefore quite evident. In as far as the mental operation called Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana partakes of the nature of knowledge itself, besides being the means

thereof, it may also be treated as transcending the category of action. Even if this line of reasoning be not accepted we remark that the proper practice of Sra-vana, etc., tends towards the dissolution of the ideas of deity, agency, dedication, etc., which are unavoidable for the practice of Karma Yoga, and as such it cannot be fitted into the scheme of life set forth by the Religion of Works.

We agree with Prof. Mitra that Sra-vana, Manana and Nididhyasana do not form the privilege of Sannyasins or any other blessed group of people. We do not think Sankara puts forward any such exclusive claim, though he has championed the rules limiting the study of the Vedas to the higher castes. Any one competent can practise them. But it must be borne in mind that reflection on the nature of Brahman alone is included in this discipline, and not the reading of the Vedas and understanding their contents. In our opinion Prof. Mitra's identification of Swadhyaya (study of Scriptures) with reflection on the nature of the Self is quite unjustifiable. Even in the restricted sense we give to it, it is not excluded from the reach of men who have not taken to a formal life of Sannyasa. But the point is that even in their case it is not their *actions* but *reflection and reflection alone* that is responsible for their knowledge, and it is only by devoting themselves exclusively to it at a certain stage of life that they can hope to gain pre-eminence in Gnana. What Sankara contends is that when a person practises this discipline with sufficient earnestness, his Karma will automatically cease; for it will gradually do away with all the requisites of Karma Yoga and draw him to an exclusive devotion to it. This is a psychological fact supported not by logic or scriptures alone, but by the life of every aspirant who has achieved anything tangible in spiritual life. By calling such men still Karma Yogins, even though they

have not formally embraced Sannyasa, as Prof. Mitra's definitions compel one to do, we do not think anything is achieved in the interests of clear thinking. It will also go against the position of Prof. Mitra in his original article wherein he has excluded people who limit work to devotional practices alone from the class of Karma Yogins; for in his words "such actions are rather an apology of Karma understood in the wide sense of the Gita to include all aspects of social duties such as the political and the military." On this very ground those who practise reflection exclusively cannot be called Karma Yogins in spite of the theory of will advocated by Prof. Mitra. As for the reasons why persons who have reached this stage should take to the fourth Ashrama ordinarily in the interests of the Varnashrama system as understood in Sankara's time, we have given them in our previous comment. We need not repeat them again here. Prof. Mitra seems to think that it is not really Sankara's view, but we would refer the curious reader to the latter portions of his commentary on Sutra III, 4, 20.

We admit that Sankara in a way makes a distinction between knowledge and maturing of knowledge; but it is not of an absolute kind as Prof. Mitra implies by his expressions: knowledge produced by Karma Yoga, and the same matured by an intense practice of discipline (Nishta) possible in Karma Sannyasa only. In the context referred to in Prof. Mitra's article, namely, in the commentary on Gita verse 18, 55, there is nothing that warrants the conclusion that knowledge springs from Karma Yoga. What we understand therefrom is that in a mind purified by Karma Yoga Gnana springs up in the presence of the aids to right knowledge, *viz.*, "the teaching of the scriptures and the Guru, development of such attributes as purity of Buddhi, humility, etc., and renuncia-

tion of action which is associated with the idea of distinctions such as agency and other factors of action." In fact in the context referred to, what Sankara attempts is not so much to draw a distinction between production of knowledge and maturing of it, but rather to show that "the act of knowing and the act of entering (into Brahman)" are not two distinct processes, but one and the same thing. In fact he states in this context that by "devotion (Nishta) is here meant that knowledge equipped with all the aids required for its rise and development and freed from obstacles has culminated in a firm conviction as to the true nature of the Self." Thus in this context the whole process of being grounded in Brahman is treated as one process. But Sankara however admits levels of knowledge, though not kinds of it. In the passage given above itself there is a reference to it, but a more clear mention of it is made in the commentary on *Brahma Sutra* III, 4, 47, in connection with the injunction of *Muniship*. The expressions he uses there to denote two levels of knowledge are *Gnana* and *Gnanathisaya* (pre-eminence in knowledge). It is asserted that the injunction of *Muniship* or pre-eminence in knowledge is with reference to the *Sannyasin* possessing knowledge, but it is objected that "if the *Sannyasin* possesses knowledge, pre-eminence in knowledge is already established thereby" and that therefore there is no use in such an injunction. The answer given is that *Muniship* is enjoined because pre-eminence in knowledge has not been reached due to the obstruction of impediments, and *Muniship* would therefore be helpful to its attainment. Thus there is a clear reference to knowledge and pre-eminence in knowledge. But then this recognition of two levels is made only to meet the requirements of dull-witted individuals whose growth is obstructed by

innumerable obstacles born of ignorance. In reality difference in level seems to be spoken of only with regard to knowledge understood in the sense of removal of ignorance, and not in the sense of revelation of the nature of the Self, in which no difference of degree can be admitted. In the case of a competent aspirant in whom the veil of ignorance is very thin, there is no such distinction between the rise of knowledge and the maturing of the same. In his commentary on *Brahma Sutra* IV, 1, 3, Sankara remarks in the course of a discussion on the question of repetition: "Those quick-witted persons on the other hand, in whose mind the sense of the words is not obstructed by ignorance, doubt and misconception, are able to intuit the sense of the sentence, 'Thou art that' on its first enunciation even, and for them therefore repetition is not required. For the knowledge of the Self having once sprung up discards all ignorance; so that in this case no *progressive* process of cognition can be acknowledged." It is evident from this that the progressive stages are not so much in knowledge proper, i. e., in the intuition of the Self as in the removal of ignorance. Of course these are not two processes; when ignorance is completely removed, knowledge which consists in the cognition of one's own nature springs up automatically without any new effort. In a thoroughly prepared mind, therefore, it undergoes no progressive stages of origination, growth and perfection.

We next proceed to examine Prof. Mitra's criticism of our remarks regarding the method and the goal of the *Karma Yogin*. He has indulged in an elaborate discussion on the significance of the Gita term '*Naishkarmya Siddhi*' which we have mentioned in our previous comment, but we fear he has missed the point we have tried to make out in that context. Our contention is

that work without the idea of agency is possible only for a Gnani and not for a Karma Yogi. A Karma Yogi is only a Sadhaka, one who is still labouring under the difficulty of Dehatma-Buddhi (looking on the body as the Self), and it is out of the question for him to be fully established in the consciousness that the Self is the unconcerned witness of all forms of activity that may flow through the body and the mind. If a person has reached this level of thought, he is neither a Karma Yogi nor a Gnana Yogi -- he is no Yogi at all but a Gnani or a Jivanmukta who has been liberated in life. No one can reach this state except through the subtle process of mental discipline known as Vichara. Theoretically there is nothing to prevent any one from practising this discipline, be he a Sannyasin or householder or anything else on heaven or earth. The question is only one of practicality. Rare indeed is an aspirant even among those who have the favourable environment of Sannyasa Ashrama, who can practise this discipline successfully; still more rare, almost impossible to find, are such individuals among non-Sannyasins, who have to labour under many more varieties of distraction. Sannyasa and other disciplines are, as we have shown, only aids to those who cannot get themselves established in knowledge owing to the presence of various mental obstructions and the distractions resulting therefrom. If there are individuals endowed with sufficient purity and strength of mind to practise Vichara successfully amidst all the worries of the world, we cannot help saying all glory unto them. They are already on the verge of perfection, if not already perfected; disciplines are not meant for them but for strugglers who want the help of favourable environment and well-directed and earnest endeavour. But most Vedantins recognise that while the perfect one can without injury live

under any environment, the Sadhaka requires every form of help that may come from outside. Even Vidyaranya who uncompromisingly supports the doctrine that a Gnani can without harm do any kind of work, even that of governing a kingdom, recommends retirement and freedom from Karma in the case of an aspirant whose mind has become mature enough to practise self-analysis uninterruptedly. (Panchadasi, Ch. VII, 124-30) In Sankara's opinion one is however to take to the fourth Ashrama under such circumstances. But when one has reached perfection in Gnana, the case is quite different; for then one *may* act or *may not* act, as we explained in our previous comment.

This brings us to a consideration of the ethical import of the Vedantic metaphysics and the vexed question of the position of the Jivanmukta. The Vedantic metaphysics is all-comprehensive, including as it does every possible strata of thought, and different people at different levels of spiritual evolution may find sanction in it for ethical principles suited to their needs. In the conception of Atman as the unchanging and unconcerned witness of all phenomena, the highest conception of Vedantic ethics is propounded. People who do not rise to this plane of thought are free to draw their own ethical implications, but it is not right on their part to characterise Sankara's position as unsound. It is always to be remembered in judging Vedantic ethics that in its highest conception it goes above all pragmatic considerations. Our interpretation of the Jivanmukta's position is based upon this idea. The problem of the Jivanmukta reduces itself to this: One who has been liberated in life is said to have become Brahman itself. The Vedanta declares that as an individual he has ceased to be, but yet his body and mind are seen to behave like those of other

individuals. Here is a riddle in the solution of which Vedantic thinkers have spent all their ingenuity. Surely nobody can see into another's mind, much less into that of a Gnani. The only criterion for classifying one as a Jivanmukta is the consideration whether he has recognised the identity of the self with Brahman. But no one viewing him from outside can say whether he has achieved this or not, and the only other remaining course is the indirect and therefore defective way of judging from the behaviour of the body and mind. Naturally different people will have their own different ideals of perfect behaviour, and comparing the Jivanmukta with their own ideals they say that he should behave in this way only and not in another. Prof. Mitra's highest ideal, as of every other noble-hearted man, is Lokasamgraha or doing good to the world, and he naturally concludes that a Jivanmukta *must* conform to this ideal. This, we should opine, is a rather pragmatic test of perfection. The '*must*', Prof. Mitra explains, does not indicate any compulsion from an outside authority, as from an external drill-sergeant, but only an internal necessity dictated by one's own nature. That this necessity is one of active benevolence, he argues on the ground that the Brahman with whom his individuality has been identified is described in the Vedanta as Love. Thus he tries to reconcile the freedom of Jivanmukta with the necessity of working for Lokasamgraha. To us this argument seems to be unsatisfactory on the following grounds : In the first place the substitution of an external drill-sergeant by an *internal* drill-sergeant is not in any way a more satisfactory solution of the difficulty. In the next place the description of Brahman as Love does not set forth the highest conception of it attainable in Jivanmukti, for every positive description of Brahman is given only to objecti-

fy that Subject-Objectless Reality for purposes of understanding and meditation, and every attribute given to Brahman is given not with a view to posit anything about it, but only to deny the contradictory of that attribute in it. Again, since the Jivanmukta has lost every trace of identification with the ego or individuality, there is no meaning in speaking of a nature belonging to him. Even the most subtle veilings of personality have been analysed by him into objective phenomena. His body, mind, all their workings, and what Prof. Mitra calls his internal nature—all these have become as foreign to him as yonder tree, or block of stone or men passing up and down the road. How can one speak of his nature when every appendage of personality has been externalised as something foreign to one's own self? The attribution of all the activities of the liberated one to Prarabdha seems a better explanation in our opinion. It implies that in reality the liberated one is quite unconnected with everything and beyond every form of predication, but we, men in ignorance, however connect the behaviours of the body and mind with his essence and call for some explanation for the same. This principle of explanation is the Prarabdha which consists in the Karma responsible for present embodiment. The Prarabdha will differ evidently in the case of different individuals and their actions too will vary in accordance with it. He whose body and mind are fitted for great works of world-reform will devote himself actively for works of human upliftment, but there may be others whose Prarabdha may not include any such mission of world-wide significance. They may therefore spend their life in a much quieter fashion, attending perhaps to the bare necessities of life. For this absence of mighty undertakings in their life, they cannot be denied the status of Jivanmuktas, since it is knowledge and not

the capacity of the body and mind for work that entitles one to that position. To say that only a good worker can be a Jivanmukta is no better than saying that only a long-lived man can be one; for both these qualifications consist in the capacity of the body and the mind. It is for this reason that we say that a Jivanmukta *may* work or *may not* work; according as nature may determine in conformity with the tendencies of his mind and body. But one thing may be confidently asserted, and it is that he will not do any selfish or immoral actions, because unless his body and mind were thoroughly pure and thus incapable of immorality, he would not have acquired the capacity to rise to the position of a Gnani. Hence selfish and immoral tendencies are excluded from his Prarabdha. We may even say that his mental tendencies are necessarily of a nature that would make him loving and well-disposed towards all creatures. As for the rest, whether one actively works for the good of the world or not, one is a Gnani all the same provided one has lost all sense of ego from the body and mind, and has realised one's essence to be separated from every conceivable objective appendage of one's personality. Regarding Prof. Mitra's imaginary example of a ruffian attacking a woman in a Jivanmukta's presence, we have to remark that it is a regrettable fact that Jivanmuktas are not so common in this world as knight-errants were in Medieval Europe that they cannot at all be relied upon for the work of rescuing maidens in distress. We may suppose that his mind being always well-disposed towards all creatures for the reason we have given before, it may react to every form of unrighteousness;

but if he fails to do so it is as futile to blame him as it is to blame Brahman Himself. But this is not at all the test of his Gnana, for these mental reactions only testify to the condition of the body and mind with which the Jivanmukta has in reality no more connection than with the other commonly accepted external objects. His essence has even during the life-time of the body transcended the domain of action, of subject and object. No attribute of personality can fathom the depth of that essence. Of him may be said in common with Brahman that silence is the best description.

As for the quotation that Prof. Mitra gives from Swami Vivekananda, the present writer is prepared to admit candidly that he does not understand its significance full well. We are inclined to think that Karma Yoga here means only life without formal renunciation. Even in such cases we have shown how it is not work but the means of right knowledge that gives rise to Gnana. In his last paragraph Prof. Mitra complains that he has never come across any one fit for monastic life. There may be others perhaps whose experience tells them just the opposite, namely that outside monastic life they have never come across persons who earnestly practise reflection on the nature of the Self. Both experiences may be true, but they however contradict each other and therefore carry no conviction to an ordinary mind. Experience is therefore convincing only to oneself not to others. As for the other historical, sociological and linguistic issues raised by Prof. Mitra, we do not touch upon them for want of space. Nor are they of special importance to the main topic of discussion.

## A POINT OF VIEW—A REPLY

By Prof. Surendranath Mitra, M.A., B.Sc., L.T.

I feel myself highly obliged and honoured in seeing, in the last January issue of the Vedanta Kesari, under the heading, "A Point of View," an editorial notice and criticism of my article, "Sannyasa as Taught in the Gita," which appeared in the last December and January issues of the same magazine. I think, the criticism now calls for a further explanation of my position and an evidence of how far I have correctly interpreted Sankara's view of the problem at issue.

While writing the original article, I was keenly conscious of the historical conditions of the time of Sankara. The Meemangsaka School of Philosophy had, no doubt, a good deal of influence in Brahmanism in the days of Sankara, and committed a mistake in taking too extreme a view in favour of the transformation of will alone. But this cannot justify Sankara's going too far to an opposite extreme in upholding a doctrine of utter incompatibility of action and knowledge. The influence of the Meemangsakas was much greater in the time of the Gita than in that of Sankara. And, it is instructive to see that although Sri Krishna, too, had to denounce the Meemangsakas (Gita: II, 44-46), he struck the right balance in a wonderful synthesis of Jnana, Karma and Bhakti, carefully avoiding the error of an exclusivist attitude (Gita: 7, 17). He instructed *Arjuna* to transcend the Gunas of Prakriti as well as all pairs of opposites by means of Karma Yoga alone "निश्चै गुणयो भवार्जुन" निर्द्वन्द्वः "मा ते संगोऽस्त्वकर्मणि" II, 45; II, 47). I am inclined to believe that Sankara was carried away, in spite of himself, by the surging waves of Buddhistic monasticism and could not withstand the temptation of organising a

Brahmanic monasticism, as an efficient short cut of least resistance, to counteract the organised forces of Buddhist mission.

I am of opinion that the Varnashrama system and the Yajnas deserve a much greater appreciation than the one with which they have been mentioned by the critic. I leave it to the readers to settle how far his views, in this respect, tally with the actual teachings of Sankara, or Sri Krishna in the Gita. I may remark however, in passing, that there are ritualisms and ritualisms, and that the richer and the more appropriate the ritualism in a society the greater is the possibility of the development of its religion. Just as a science, such as mathematics, or an art, such as poetry, depends for its development on a rich and appropriate symbolism,—although the symbolism has a great risk of degenerating into a system of mechanical and unassimilated formulae or technique in the case of many persons,—so also even the highest flights of religion are possible with the help of appropriate rites and other symbols, in spite of the fact that the latter do often degrade into lifeless forms with many people. The rites and other symbols may change from age to age, according to the changing religious needs of the time; but, the value of the spirit of Yajna underlying all our duties, as inculcated by Sri Krishna in the Gita, abides for ever.

My critic objects to my assertion that, according to Sankara, Karma Yoga is the cause of Jnana. I think, the following three quotations from Sankara's commentary on the Gita may be enough to bear out this my assertion.

Towards the end of the introduction of this commentary we meet with the

following statement:—"The scheme of duties, characterised by urges of the will and prescribed with reference to the Varnashrama system of society, has for its object the promotion of worldly prosperity and causes the attainment of the abodes of the gods. Nevertheless, if they are performed without any desire of fruits for individual gratification and with the consciousness of their being offered as sacrifices to God, they lead to the purification of the mind. And for the person, whose mind is thus purified, *these duties are the cause of the production of knowledge* as well as of his fitness for an intensive practice of the discipline in knowledge, thus ultimately becoming the cause of the *summum bonum* also."\*

Thus we clearly see that, according to Sankara, Karma Yoga is the *direct* cause of the production of knowledge and an indirect cause of the *Nishtha* in Jnana, i. e., of an intense practice of discipline in that knowledge.

We find this very idea again expressed towards the end of Sankara's commentary on the 10th verse of the 2nd chapter of the Gita. He says, "This passage may also be explained to the effect that Janaka and others of his type were not perfect knowers of the ultimate reality; they achieved the end characterised by purification of mind or by *the production of knowledge only, by means of actions* offered as sacrifices to God."†

Again, in his commentary on the 11th verse of the 4th Chapter of the Gita,

\* अयुदयार्थोऽपि यः प्रवृत्तिलक्षणे धर्मो वर्णाश्रमांशोद्दिश्य विहितः सः देवादित्यनप्राप्तिहेतुरपि सन्नीश्वरार्पणबुद्ध्याऽनुष्ठीयमानः सत्त्वशुद्धये भवति फलाभिसंधिवर्जितः । शुद्धसत्त्वस्य च ज्ञाननिष्ठयोग्यताप्राप्तिद्वारेण ज्ञानोत्पत्तिहेतुत्वेन च निःश्रेयसहेतुत्वमपि प्रतिपद्यते ।"

† "अथ न ते तत्त्वविद ईश्वरार्पितेन कर्मणा साधनभूतेन संसिद्धिं सत्त्वशुद्धिं ज्ञानोत्पत्तिं लक्षणां वा संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादय इति व्याख्येयम् ।"

Sankara states: "I show my kindness by *bestowing knowledge upon those persons who perform the prescribed actions* without desiring their fruits for individual gratification and who also desire to attain liberation; similarly, I show my kindness by bestowing liberation on those Sannyasins who have knowledge and who also desire to have liberation."§

That Sankara *does* make a distinction between the production of knowledge (possible in Karma Yoga), and a maturing of the production of knowledge, or, in other words, an intense practice of discipline (*Nishtha*) in the same knowledge (possible in Karma-Sannyasa only), will be evident also from his commentary on the 55th verse of the 18th Chapter of the Gita, together with his reason for the distinction. I refrain from quoting it for fear of taxing too much the patience of general readers.

I agree that Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana (hearing, reasoning and concentration of attention) are the only direct cause of the production of the knowledge of the real nature of the Self or Brahman. But Karma Yoga does not necessarily exclude them. The scriptures prescribe for the three twice-born-classes the study of the Vedas including the Upanishads, not only in the Brahmacharya Ashrama with a competent teacher, but also in the Garhasthya Ashrama individually (*Swadhyaya*). It is prescribed, too, that they should also reason about and meditate on the instructions of scriptures as much as possible. Is not the Gita itself the quintessence of all the Upanishads, and was it not revealed to the Grihastha Arjuna even in a battle-field? Even the Sudras

§ "भजाम्यहमनुगृह्णाम्यहमित्येतत् .....

ये यथोक्तकारिणस्त्वफलार्थिनो मुमुक्षवश्च तान् ज्ञानप्रदानेन । ये ज्ञानिनः सम्यासिनो मुमुक्षवश्च तान् मोक्षप्रदानेन ।"

and women might have the knowledge through a reading or hearing of the Itihasas and the Puranas, and Sankara too, admits it in his commentary on the Brahma Sutras, mentioning the instances of Vidura, Sulabha, etc. But neither the Sastras, nor Sankara, would sanction their taking to Sannyasa at any stage of their life. Then, why should we suppose that these actions are or were the monopoly of Sannyasashrama? From this, it also follows that Sankara's Sannyasa, unlike that of Buddha, was not meant to be universal, having no more than a limited and local application.

I do not agree with the critic that the classification of Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana as actions is an abuse of language. The relation between the above three processes and actions is one of species and genus. Even in ordinary English we hear and read of acts of hearing, thinking, reasoning, etc. By action I mean, following Sankara in his commentary on the Brahma Sutras, any process directed by will. Certainly, these processes depend on our will, since we may or may not perform them. Moreover, every one of these processes involves the distinction of function, agency, result etc., just as walking or the performance of a religious rite does. Reasoning, for example, is a function of the mind in relation to a subject as well as an object, and the result is the arriving at a valid conclusion, and the destruction of doubts and of confusion of thought. Hence, in our scriptures as well as in our philosophies, actions are unanimously classified as physical, verbal and mental. As one single instance, I beg to refer to the Gita itself, XVIII, 15, where Sankara and Sridhara, too, in their commentaries, agree to this classification.

I agree with my critic in his view that the Gita speaks of a goal for the Karma-Yogi, viz., Naishkarmyasiddhi. But I do

not agree that, according to the Gita, there is any need of renouncing all Karmas (*i. e.*, moral activities) after this end is achieved. The word *Naishkarmya* occurs in the Gita only twice (III, 4; and XVIII, 49). In the 3rd chapter it occurs in connection with Sri Krishna's contention that it is impossible for this end to proceed except from the performance of Karmas, while Sri Krishna was comparing Jnana-Yoga with Karma-Yoga and proving the superiority of the latter over the former (III, 7-8). In the 18th chapter the word occurs in connection with Sri Krishna's statement of the fact that it is a means to an intensive practice of Jnana leading to Bhakti (Love of God), out of which arises the most perfect knowledge of God as well as the adept's entering into identity with Him. According to Tilak this has nothing to do with Karma-Sannyasa, but only with Karma-Yoga. I am rather inclined to think that this is in connection with Karma-Sannyasa, since here, too, Sri Krishna appears to be comparing separately the effects of Sannyasa (which, perhaps, here means Karma-Sannyasa) and of Yoga (renunciation of fruits of action in Karma-Yoga) in answer to a pointed question of Arjuna about such a comparison (XVIII, 1). It is immaterial, however, whether even here, it is Tilak's interpretation that is correct or mine. For, there can be no doubt that a little further on Sri Krishna emphatically reasserts that the same *summan bonum* can be achieved even by Karma-Yoga (XVIII, 56).

My argument, in this connection, would be still clearer if we remember the history of the word *Naishkarmya*. This is a very old technical word used in common both by the Vedantins and the Meemangsakas (See *e. g.*, Sankara's commentary on the Brahma Sutras; 4, 3, 14). According to the Meemangsakas Mukti (perfection) can be attained only

by doing the Nitya and Naimittika Karmas enjoined in the Vedas, without any desire of the fruits of these actions, and avoiding only the Kamya and Nishiddha (prohibited) Karmas. It is this changing of Karmas into Akarmas—i. e., of the bondage of actions into freedom—that is called Naishkarmya by the Meemangsakas and not the renunciation of all actions. This is the sense in which the word is used in the Gita, too, though, according to the Gita, unlike the Meemangsakas, actions which exclude Jnana and Bhakti are not enough to lead to Mukti. Readers especially interested in this point may look up its much more elaborate discussion in Tilak's Gita. I beg to point out only this much more here that while the Karma-Sannyasi Jnana Yogis have only one final end in view, that of their individual Mukti, the Karma-Yogis have two., viz., the individual Mukti as well as Lokasamgraha, (compare Swami Vivekananda's ideal of आत्मनो मोक्षायै जगद्धिताय च । And, it is this latter end which necessitates their still continuing moral actions even after they attain Naishkarmya-Siddhi or become *Yogarudha*. (Certainly there is no sense in calling a person Karma-Yogarudha, who renounces all Karmas, any more than in calling a person Ashwarudha who is off the back of his horse).

I do not believe that if one accepts Sankara's metaphysics, one is bound to accept all the ethical conclusions Sankara draws from it. My critic will perhaps agree with me in the view that Swami Vivekananda was a genuine follower of Sankara's metaphysics and that he was a philosophical genius of an exceptionally high order. But in spite of this fact we find Swami Vivekananda, too, expressing the opinion that Karma-Yoga is a *direct* and independent means to the realisation of the *summum bonum* of life. As an example, let us take the following quotation from the great Swami : "The

Yogas of work, of wisdom, and of devotion are all capable of serving as *direct and independent means* for the attainment of Moksha or perfect liberation. And therefore it has been said in the Gita—'Fools alone say that work and philosophy are different and not the learned.' " (" Karma-Yoga," Chapter VI, p. 135, Udbodhan Office Edition). In old days, too, in their commentaries on the Ishopanishad, Uvatacharya (Mantras 11, 12 and 14) and Anantacharya (Mantras 2, 10, 11 and 12) upheld the doctrine of synchronal combination of Jnana and Karma, although they both appear to have been strict followers of the metaphysical system of Sankara. The same remark holds good in the case of late Mr. Tilak, too. It is interesting to note in the history of this problem in Advaitism the singular instance of Sarvajnatma-Muni, the celebrated author of Sangkshepa-Sariraka, who held that even the proscribed Kamya Karmas contribute to the production of Jnana.

Sankara's doctrine of the incompatibility of Karma and Jnana, I consider to be a defect in the practical application of his philosophy. This, I think, would be evident to many intelligent and dispassionate philosophical thinkers, who have even a very high admiration for his philosophy. The great German philosopher and admirer of Sankara, Paul Deussen, says, for example, "However natural it would have been to desire from the described position of him who knows himself as soul of the world, a positive moral disposition which shows itself in works of justice and love, this consequence is not drawn in Sankara but only in the Bhagavad Gita (XIII, 27-28)." [The system of the Vedanta, Johnston's Translation; Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago; Appendix, p. 477, para 42. Cf. also the same book, Chapter II, last but one para, p. 59; and Chapter XXXV, art. 3, pp. 403-404].

The doctrine of synchronal combination appears to me to be the only logical conclusion, for practical religion, from the metaphysics of Sankara. It is perfected souls [*Siddhas* or adepts] that alone are the fittest persons to do good to the world (*Lokasamgraha*). Other souls are fit enough to do it only in proportion to their nearness to perfection. It is true that in the condition of perfected morality we cannot conceive of an effort in the sense of a conflict between the true nature of the self and the false one superimposed by ignorance. For, in perfected knowledge all ignorance is consumed together with all implied imperfections, including the efforts involved in conflicts with immoral or selfish impulses. And it is just then that the perfected moral will, *i.e.*, the conscious urges proceeding from the purest love will find expression in unrestricted profusion in the purest possible forms of moral action. The self, for all practical purposes, then dissolves in the selves of all. Even Vidyaranya, in his *Panchadashi*, conceives of the *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* as the promoter of pure morality and characterises the *Samadhi* as a cloud of morality pouring down the nectar of *Dharma* in torrents in thousands of ways (I, 59-60). The recognition of one's own self as the self of others is the only true basis and the only intelligible explanation of morality, as recognised by Schopenhauer and Deussen too. Is it not the only logical conclusion from this that where this recognition is the clearest, as in the life of the *Jivanmukta*, the morality, too, must necessarily be the most unselfish and the most vigorous?

According to Advaitism, Brahman or self is not only absolute knowledge but also absolute love (*Panchadashi*, I, 8, 9, 11; VIII, 56-57; XII, 69, etc.). The knowledge aspect expresses itself in the life of the *Jivanmukta* (the liberated soul in embodied existence) as a never-failing

recognition of the identity of his self with the selves of others, inspite of the apparent duality of experience, just as an astronomer never fails to recognise the rotation and revolution of the earth inspite of its apparent stationariness. So, too, the love-aspect is bound to express itself in the life of a man who is fully *Jivanmukta* in serving the genuine interests of other selves, since his own self with its interests is dissolved in other selves with their interests. Surely, Advaitism does not claim that all duality of experience is put an end to in the life of a *Jivanmukta*; it is only the duality created by the desires of the individual that is extinguished, but the duality created by God yet persists till the *Jivanmukta* is disembodied (*i. e.*, attains *Videha Kaivalya*). [*Panchadashi*, IV, 39; VII, 83, etc.]. Hence the duties of the *Jivanmukta* for the destruction of the evils and the preservation and promotion of the good of others still remain, so long as he lives.

The will of God can utilise the cosmic forces for the good of rational beings only through the will of the latter (*Panchadashi*, VI, 177). Whatever good God has done to our society through the bodies of the *Jnanis* of the type of Sankara and some of his followers could be done only through their activities. It could not have been done by some miracles if they had remained inactive.

It is, of course, true that a *Jivanmukta* does not do his duties to society in blind obedience to an external authority, such as the laws or social opinion, but only by virtue of the spontaneous urges of a perfected moral will within, rooted in perfected love—an essential characteristic of Brahman. Let us imagine a *Jivanmukta* in sight of a ruffian going to outrage the modesty of a woman. Would it be reasonable to say that he would be equally perfect whether he does or does not exert himself according to his power,

to help her? If he does not, he would clearly be no Jivanmukta at all, however capable he may be to enjoy individually the pleasure of a mystic union.

It is also true that a Jivanmukta always realizes his identity with God from whom all the Vedas with the laws are born. But a God who does not Himself obey His own laws of love and justice would be a very poor God indeed—a morally depraved arbitrary despot! God, too, is constantly engaged in doing good to all in *Willing Obedience* to His own laws—by virtue of the *necessary* overflow of His own perfect nature as God, and not in blind obedience to the commands of an external drill sergeant. [Gita III, 22-24.] The Jivanmukta too must act similarly. [Gita III, 25; IV, 14-15.] Otherwise Advaitism will remain justly open to the charge of amorality with all its implications. We thus see that the words *must* and *must not* should have a place in describing the conduct of a perfect Jnani, just as that of God, in the sense that he cannot *necessarily* behave in contradiction to the essential characteristics of his being, *viz.*, those of perfect love and perfect knowledge. A perfect soul, in embodied existence, cannot necessarily act in an immoral way (Panchadashi, IV, 53-56), and he cannot but act morally.

As for interpreting a scripture according to one's philosophy, there can be no reproach, so long as one remains free from the *vitium subreptionis*—the eagerness or the tendency to read into the scripture one's own ideas, theories sentiments, or attitude. The commentator

should have the frank courage and readiness to differ from the scriptural texts, too, whenever a disinterested love of truth or of accuracy of historical facts requires it. Otherwise, one will be sinning against intellectual integrity—"a correct sense of judgment regarding truth and untruth,.....and an intense desire to know the Truth." The guilt of many Indian philosophers in this respect is not less unpardonable than that of many compromising philosophers of the West in their reluctance to push their enquiries to the farthest possible limit and "examine problems in their stark nakedness."

My critic has correctly understood the essential meaning of my expression "open-door monasticism." I would only add that my personal experience has convinced me that individuals fit enough for monastic life are very rare, indeed. I have yet to come across one such. So far as I remember, I know of only two monks who have even an open-minded genuine search for truth or a steady and systematic pursuit of studies and thinking; and I believe that even these two monks could have been what they are, if not better, if they had never become monks. As for the pitfalls of unconscious swerving from the path of truth, they are common to all—monks or no monks. Life can grow best through a multitude of moral obligations and social responsibilities, so long as they remain within a certain range of complexity and hardship, depending on individual capacity, which, too, is by no means constant.

# SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA, SANNYASIN AND TEACHER

*By Sister Devamata*

## VIII

**T**HOROUGHNESS in all his thought-processes was characteristic of Swami Ramakrishnananda. He never left a problem half-solved. He carried it into his conversation, into his reading, into his meditation, he lived with it, until he found a solution for it. I remember when he was striving to discover a demonstrable point of contact between physical space and spiritual space, how insistent was his effort. He read the latest books on astronomy, he talked with those who were versed in the science of physics, he spent long hours searching the spaces of his own inner consciousness. Death alone was able to check the ardour of his seeking. The solutions he reached were always definite. There was no vagueness in his mode of thinking. His thought was bold and convincing. Those who came to pay him homage often returned day after day, drawn by his power and the unfailing courtesy of his welcome. It was not his custom to rise when visitors entered, but from his seat on the rug at the far end of the monastery hall he would greet them with a gracious smile and a friendly wave of the hand, as he requested them to take their places in the group already gathered round him. There were certain devotees who came daily on their way home from their offices, and this led to a continuity of thought in the conversations of succeeding days. One simple question would provide the theme for many gatherings. So it was when a devotee asked: "What constitutes morality?" The Swami's answer was: "All

that takes man to God is morality; whatever takes man away from God is immorality."

"There is a social law and a religious law," the Swami continued. "God commands us to punish those who disobey Him. Why should we punish them? To make them obedient servants. It is true that Christ says, 'When a man strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other'; but this is meant for those who have given up the world, not for the householder. He must punish the wrongdoer in order to protect society; otherwise there will be general depredation, the good will be destroyed and the wicked will prevail. For instance, a man desires nothing but God. He may have a house and another man may ask for it. The man who cares only for God can say: 'Yes, take it. I do not want it.' But that would not be possible for a man who still wishes to live in the world.

"Punishment is not a bad thing. If by punishment you help to rectify a man, really you have done good to him. You should not allow the wicked to thrive. In a field there are weeds, but if you want to reap a good harvest, you must pluck them out. A revengeful spirit, however, is bad. Satan always tries to revenge himself, but God never felt the least anger toward Satan. They say God sent him down below, but that is not true. Satan went of his own accord because he could not have what he wanted in heaven. The attitude of God toward Satan was that of pity. The attitude of Satan toward God was that of revenge, jealousy, hatred. These feelings

are always Satanic. Vengeance is based on egotism and malice."

The following evening the conversation turned on the origin of evil and one of the habitual group asked the question: "How has evil come?" Swami Ramakrishnananda replied: "The dualists say that all the good in man belongs to God and all the bad belongs to the man himself. The monists say that all belongs to God, both good and bad. In reality all is God. It is He who actuates the evil-doer as well as the saint.

"A man has sugar candy to sell in the shape of a mango or a bird or a dog. A little boy says to his father, 'Please buy me that bird.' He thinks it will taste sweeter than the mango or the dog, whereas in reality they are all alike. In the same way man looks at the world and calls this good and this bad, but as a matter of fact it is all made out of the same substance. God has created both good and evil, but He is beyond both. He has created the two parties and set them warring against each other, while He looks on as the Witness. All this warring of good and bad, pleasure and pain, is merely the play of God; this creation is His laugh. Some one said to Sri Ramakrishna, 'When God could make all people good, why did He create evil? Why did He not make every one good?' Sri Ramakrishna's answer was, 'Then with whom would He play?'

"It is because we are mistaking the real for the unreal, the unreal for the real, that all this seems so serious to us. We are taking the play to be the real thing and the Player to be unreal: whereas the Player or God is the one reality and the play of creation is absolutely unreal. If you will analyse your own life, you will find out how vague and uncertain it is—a birth, a death and a little space between. Out of darkness you have come, into darkness you will go, and you call the space be-

tween life. There was no dream, then you dreamed, and again there was no dream. A dream you look upon as unreal, but this little span of life is just as much a dream, just as unreal as the dream that comes to you in sleep. At any moment death may call you away."

Swami Ramakrishnananda spoke with great earnestness. The unreality of this outer life with all its perplexities and distresses was a subject on which he felt deeply. The outer world never grew real to him. He was never trapped into looking upon the play as the serious thing and giving a lesser place to the Player. At all times the Player stood in clear outline before him. He never forgot his Divine origin. "Man is made in the image of God; that is, man possesses all the powers of God, but in miniature form," he declared. 'Evolution is a process of 'rolling out.' As we evolve spiritually, the inner powers become more and more manifest.

"Evolution means wanting something more. It implies a craving. A craving for more of God makes us evolve spiritually, a craving for outer things or earthly powers brings material evolution. The same craving is in the ant, in the angel, in man and in the *Siddhas* (Seers). Man worships the gods to satisfy this craving. But Bhagavan Sri Krishna cautions every one against worshipping the gods. 'Those who worship the gods go to the gods,' he says, 'but my devotees come to me'. What is desirable? Is it desirable to go to the gods or to the Supreme Being? Sri Krishna answers this explicitly: Those who depend on Me, I provide for them, I take care of them, I become their servant."

The question was asked, "Can a man ever do as he likes?" The Swami's answer was: "Sometimes he thinks he is doing as he likes, but in reality God is guiding all his movements. God is the only Doer, nothing is done by man.

The devotees asked again : " Then what is the use of man's making any effort to be good or to realize God ? " Swami Ramakrishnananda replied : " You cannot help acting. Your very nature is to act. Can you remain perfectly quiet even for a moment ? This body is born to act. Your hands, your feet, your eyes and ears have a natural tendency to

action. As long as you must act, you will want to do that which will bring the most desirable results ; so, as long as you act you will have to try to be good, to be virtuous, to be unselfish, in order to get the desirable results you are seeking ; and since God is the most desirable result to be attained, you will have to strive to realize Him."

*To be concluded*

## PROOFS OF THE SOUL IN TAMIL SAIVA SIDDHANTA \*

*By Miss Violet Paranjoti, M. A.*

**T**HE Siva-jnana-bodham of Meikanda Devar is the chief among the philosophical works of the Tamil Siddhanta school of philosophy. A study of this work reveals to us the fact the Siddhantin is convinced of the existence of God, of the soul and of whatever else goes to make up a spiritualistic view of the universe. The Siddhantin is led to this position of a happy conviction in the eternal realities which sanctify human life as much by revelation as by reason. There is no dogmatic assertion of the realities which we in all meekness are expected to recognise as true. By the full exercise of our reason, we are led step by step to the facts of the system. And there is an implicit challenge to us to examine the system by the exercise of reason before accepting it. Since the thirteenth century when these arguments were formulated in Tamil, there has been much development in philosophic thought. And we at this date, may now examine these arguments for the existence of the soul in the light of metaphysics to see what has to be rejected as unable to stand the light of criticism, and what can be accepted as valid.

It is the third Sutra of the Siva-jnana-bodham that gives seven arguments for the existence of the soul. The first of these arguments states that there is in us something which says, "I am not the body; I am not any of the sense-organs." There is something remaining after every part of the body is eliminated as not being itself, and that which thus intelligently differentiates itself from the body and its organs is the soul. This argument establishes that "an intelligent soul exists, as its intelligence is exercised when it says, 'This is not the soul; this is not the soul.'"

This first argument refutes the Sunyavadi who says the soul is non-existent. If the Sunyavadi persists in saying that even the intelligence which refuses to be identified with any part of the body is non-existent, then his statement is equivalent to his asserting that his mother is childless.

We cannot here fail to be reminded of the similar way in which Descartes proceeds to establish the existence of the soul. He, too, adopting the method of elimination, realises that even after ruling out his body and sense-organs,

\* Substance of a paper read at the 8th session of Indian Philosophical Congress ; Mysore.

there must be something which constitutes his self. The very fact of doubt implies the existence of a doubter.

The second argument refutes one sect of the Lokayatas who say that the soul is no other than the body. The body cannot be the soul. As the phrase, 'my body,' is used in a separate possessive sense, there is a soul different from the body. As a man clearly realises that his city and his wife are not himself but different from him, so with careful consideration one can see that the soul is other than the body. The soul is that which, with a possessive sense, speaks of the body as its body.

The body certainly cannot be regarded as the soul, for as was made clear in the last argument, there is in us some residue even after elimination of every part of the body, and it is this factor which stands over against the body, and with a possessive sense speaks of the body as belonging to it. The soul is this residual factor which exercises the ownership. The body then cannot be the soul. "I am not this collection of members which is called the human body," says Descartes and Bradley gives expression to the same fact, saying, "Few of us would venture to maintain that the self is the body."

Another of the sects of the Lokayata says that since it is admitted by all that the five sense-organs perceive the five different sensations, these organs constitute the soul. This is refuted by the third argument which says that each sense-organ has its own particular function only, so that the eye, for example, cannot perceive sound sensations, just as the ear cannot sense the appearance of any object. But there is some one who experiences all the five different sensations, a feat impossible for any or all of the sense-organs. This is the soul, which, for gaining knowledge of the world, has the sense-organs as the avenues of sense-

knowledge. The sense-organs merely function, but are not capable of thinking 'we function thus.' They have the objective consciousness, but not the subjective consciousness. That which has the subjective consciousness is the soul. The sense-organs cannot be the soul because they are deficient in two respects. Not one of them can rise to performing any function but its own, nor is any of them capable of self-consciousness. But there is in us a factor which has neither of the deficiencies, while on the other hand it is able to perceive all the five different sensations and is also characterised by self-consciousness. This is the soul.

The above arguments have proved that the soul is not the body and not the sense-organs. The fourth argument attempts to prove that the soul is not the subtle body or body of the dream condition. The argument states that in sleep, when the senses lose their action, the soul enters another body, the subtle body, and has dreams, and when waking comes back to the gross body. The soul is therefore different from the subtle body. The subtle body and the soul cannot both remember the dream experiences in the same way. The dream body, is of one nature only—dreamy—and what it sees in dreams is quite vivid to it. If it be this body that remembers the dreams, it should remember them not as dim recollections, but as actual vivid experiences, just as in the dream condition. In our actual experience we find that on waking there is a factor which remembers these dream experiences and says 'I dreamt thus and thus.' This factor not only remembers the dream experiences, but is of twofold nature capable of perceiving things in the waking state and in the dream state. When it says, 'I dreamt so' it differentiates these experiences from waking experiences, for the former compared with the

latter are now very faint. Thus to sum up what has been explained, the subtle body should be able to have vivid recollections of dream experiences, but in our actual experience we find that there is a factor able to contrast the dream experiences with waking experiences, and the former compared with the latter are dim. The subtle body theorist maintains that the subtle body is the soul. Against this the Saiva Siddhantin maintains that the recollection of dream experiences belongs not to the subtle body, but to another factor, which is the soul. The subtle body therefore cannot be the soul.

This argument is open to criticism in some respects. The assumptions of the argument are first that there is subtle body functioning only in sleep, and secondly that if in the waking state it remembered the dream experiences, it would have a very vivid recollection of them. The first assumption that the subtle body is different from the gross body cannot be accepted for the two bodies are not radically distinct; there is only one body which in the waking state has all its organs functioning and in sleep has fewer Tattvas at work; there is then one body which is co-present with the soul. If so how can it be so easily proved that it is the one rather than the other which recollects these dream experiences? With regard to the second assumption that if in the waking state the recollection of dream experiences belonged to the subtle body it would have vivid memories, we have to reply that this does not follow; for, what can otherwise be vivid may be distorted by the grosser Tattvas co-existing with that body in the waking condition.

A plausible argument on some such lines as these put forward by others is that in dreams, there comes into being a dream body which is entirely different from the gross body. In the waking

state, there is in us something which owns the dreams as well; and this is the soul.

In the Sanskrit commentary the third and fourth arguments are treated as one for the purpose of proving the existence of the soul as distinct from the sense-organs, on the ground of the existence of consciousness in dreams when the sense-organs are at rest. The Tamil author in splitting up the argument into two has introduced some confusion here.

Another sect of the Lokayata, the vital air theorist, says that unlike the subtle body which is present only in the dream condition, the vital air, which is present always, is the soul. This is refuted by the fifth argument which points out that this body is given to us in order that we may have cognition of the world and the experiences of pleasure and pain. If the vital air be the soul, then, as it functions as well in sleep as it does in the waking state, it should have cognition of the world as well as the experiences of pleasure and pain in sleep as in the waking condition. But these we see are in abeyance in sleep, when the soul is resting, and resume their activities when the soul awakes. So these functions exist, not for the benefit of the vital air but for something other than this and that is the soul. And it is the soul which seems to have the capacity to exercise these functions or to stop them. The vital air is not the soul. The soul is something other than this.

The sixth argument maintains that the changing psychical states cannot be the soul. There must be some underlying identity which is present through all the flow of psychic phenomena and which recognises its identity in spite of occasional lapses of consciousness as in sleep.

With regard to this argument the Tamil commentator has not strictly kept to the original. He has interpreted the

argument to indicate that the soul is different from God. As he points out, our minds are subject to various limitations. We can only learn in part, and bit by bit, and our consciousness is always in such an incessant flow that we have hardly grasped one thing, when thought moves on to another, and this present thought already seems to be giving way to another thought that will come anon only to speed away as soon. And we are subject to forgetfulness and we can never have comprehensive knowledge. One other distinction is that "the human intelligence requires to be taught, improved and developed ; it is imperfect and needs the support of a perfect intelligence." Our minds characterised by these and other limitations cannot compare with God's mind that is omniscient. The soul therefore cannot be identified with God.

As thus interpreted by the Tamil commentator, this is no argument for the proof of the existence of the soul. It is more a description of the nature of the soul.

The argument as in the original, contending for the existence of the soul on the ground of personal identity is very common. Personal identity is of course an essential feature of the soul which is mostly conceived as a permanent entity that cannot be identified with the flowing psychical states, each one of which is different from the rest. But whether such identity is intelligible will be examined later.

The last argument contends that the aggregate of the Tattvas cannot be the soul, for the Tattvas are constituted of he perishable Maya. The soul is something other than the Tattvas. This argument and the previous one are directed against the Buddhists who sought to dissolve the soul into an aggregate of Khandas or a series of cognitions.

From a general survey of these arguments it is evident that they are based mainly on elimination and the sense of personal identity. The soul is not the body or the sense-organs or the dream body or the aggregate of the Tattvas. The soul is that which intelligently differentiates itself from all these factors, and speaks of the body as its body, and appropriates dreams as its experiences. It is that which through all the changing psychical states, and through occasional lapses of consciousness maintains its identity. The net result of these arguments is then that the soul exists, and is different from such gross factors as the body and the sense-organs and that it has a continuous existence.

Can the conclusions regarding the soul withstand critical examination ? Descartes, after rigorously yielding up all that was doubtful, found that there was one indubitable fact, and that it was his self, and the existence of his self was manifest from the fact that he doubted his existence. If he doubted, there must be a doubter. The similar Siddhanta contention that, after eliminating every part of the body, there is still a factor left and that this is the soul would appear to be so far valid.

All the knowledge that we have gained about the soul till now is mainly negative. We have seen that it is not the body or the sense-organs etc. The question which now arises is—"What then is the soul ? In what way can we conceive of it ? And in what sense can it be said to exist ?" If it is not anything so gross as the body, then, perhaps it may be something psychical. Can the self be the psychical contents that are to be found at any moment in our experience ? Introspection reveals that at any moment of one's existence, there is a mass of psychical content such as, for example, one's thoughts at the time, one's feelings, one's

awareness, of the environment, and in short all the felt experiences. Can these be said to constitute the self? It is at once obvious that these fluctuating psychical states cannot constitute the self as they are in an incessant flow, and the self must be a permanent factor.

Perhaps, then, the self is constituted of what can be reckoned as one's average psychical experiences. We have noticed that one's psychical contents from moment to moment are too changing to constitute the self. Perhaps when we take these psychical contents, and find out what is common to them this average would constitute the self.

It will be objected that is very absurd to identify the self with either the momentary or the average experiences of the self. The self, we are told, is an individual experiencer of these experiences. Therefore, over and above all this concrete filling is the self. But can we succeed in finding such a self that is a permanent factor and that is other than these experiences? Reflection unfolds to us the fact that what go to make up a man's self are his psychical experiences and his environment. Macbeth was a brave warrior and quite self-composed at all times, but the moment his hands were stained with blood, he had visions of a dagger and of the ghosts of his victims, and Lady Macbeth had to find excuses for his strange behaviour in the presence of the guests. We are in eager search of an essential self, but it seems well nigh impossible to meet with success. We find that the psychical experiences are too inconstant to be the self, and yet it is these happy or unhappy experiences that appear to constitute the self, so that if we remove these, we remove the self as well, or even if any residue is left, it merely amounts to a non-entity not worthy recognising. We here find ourselves up

against a fatal dilemma which Bradley expresses thus:—"If you take an essence which can change it is not an essence at all; while if you stand on anything more narrow, the self has disappeared." To quote Bradley again, "Evidently any self which we can find is some concrete form of unity of psychical existence and whoever wishes to introduce it as something apart or beyond, clearly does not rest his case upon observation."

Closer investigation leads to an even more desperate situation where we can draw no hard and fast line of distinction between the self and the not-self. At any moment of our existence, there seem to be present the self and the not-self. But from this, no hasty conclusion can be drawn that the self and the not-self are absolutely different one from the other. The self passes into the not-self and *vice-versa*, a circumstance by no means encouraging to those eager in pursuit of an essential self closed by wall from all the changing psychical phenomena which with certainty are placed in the category of not-self. The sound that was so disturbing to a person gets to be less of a nuisance as the person concerned gets used to it, and though continuing with the same tonal intensity, it finally passes out of the focus of his attention, gliding unobserved from the not-self to the self. The self in the same way can pass over to the not-self. Thus the feeling of pain which forms part of our inmost self is felt as a disturbing factor that should be eradicated. Of course it may be that not all of the self can thus pass into the not-self and not all of the not-self can pass into the self. Granting this, it still remains that when we abstract from the self all that does not seem essential to it, we seem to be left with what is best described in Bradley's terms as "a wretched fraction and "poor atom," and a "bare remnant" that is not worth having.

We meet with a similar difficulty when we approach the problem of personal identity, and this needs careful consideration. We do not think of a man as made up of a number of momentary selves but as one individual that remains the same through all the varying experiences of his lifetime. 'A' who is born now will be the same individual ten years hence or even in his old age. What we mean is that through the varying stages of life, we have one individual. When recollecting experiences of years ago, a man says, "I did this." On close examination, do we find that such personal identity is real? If so, in what does it consist? We may speedily dismiss the idea that personal identity consists in having the same body, for apart from the objection that the body changes as time goes on, it is a very crude conception. Neither can memory serve as a satisfactory basis of personal identity. The events relating to long periods of our life are forgotten, so that memory, being full of limitations at its best, fails to serve the purpose. Continuity of psychical experiences cannot serve the purpose, for the reason that in sleep this continuity is snapped. Moreover, besides continuity, there is need of qualitative sameness, and this too is not to be had in the stream of psychical experiences, each of which is different from the other. We may make another attempt and say that the various interests of a person go to build up his personal identity. It is very obvious that this suggestion must be rejected as our interests are never the same all through life. The suggestion that perhaps the self is encased in a monad rouses our hope, but there is only disappointment here as in the above instances. Granting that the self is a monad, then, this factor either changes or does not change. If it changes, then where is the permanence that is essential for personal identity? If the monad stands

aloof from the flow of psychical states, and thus maintains its permanence, why then we may as well have the self dwelling in the stars or the hills for all its indifference to what is happening in the human organism.

We have met with failure both in our attempt to conceive of the sense in which the soul exists and in our effort to understand personal identity. And yet we know that the soul and personal identity in some sense exist, and hence we must somehow have failed to arrive at the true conceptions. As Bradley says: "That selves exist, and are identical in some sense is indubitable." But with all our diligence, we have failed to understand the self and its identity. Our attempts to conceive of them have turned out to be full of contradictions.

Our failure to conceive of the self and its identity makes us wonder whether we should not retrace our steps and instead of regarding the self as an independent and self-subsisting factor, as we have done so far, we should rather consider it as a part of a bigger whole, which therefore should not be looked upon as independent and self-subsisting. Our attempt thus far to understand the self may be compared to the effort to understand the root of a plant without any relation whatever to the whole of the plant. The certainty as to the thinker may be based not on an atomic self but on an Infinite Consciousness of which thinker, thought and thinking are appearances. Our mistake thus far has been in attempting to conceive of the self as an independent factor out of all relation to the Infinite Consciousness of which it is an aspect. Hence our conceptions of the self have resulted in contradictions.

For the Siddhanta the soul is not atomic, but infinite and all-pervasive. If, on the other hand, we find the soul confined within limits, it is because of

Anava Mala, and all human effort is to be directed to ridding the soul of this impurity which acts as a drag on the soul preventing it from being all-pervasive.

The Saiva Siddhantin, in giving convincing proofs of the existence of the soul, went much further than his rivals who denied the existence of the soul, and in differentiating the soul from other factors of the human organism, he outstripped all other alien schools who identified the soul with gross factors. While then he is free from the defects

of materialism and of spiritual atomism, yet he is only half way to the truth that the self is one and infinite. Not merely does he hold to the difficult and contradictory notion of a plurality of infinite souls, but he holds also to the notion of an objective world over against them. For Descartes who thus sundered the self from the non-self, Representationism and Occasionalism were necessary consequences. The epistemological consequences for the Siddhanta are not dissimilar, but will have to be noticed separately.

## THE SYSTEM OF SANKHYA

*By K. A. Krishnaswamy Aiyar, B. A.*

**T**HE Sankhya posits two independent real entities, namely, spirit and matter. The soul or spirit is eternal and of the nature of consciousness and bliss, and is free from all activity, but being embodied, it suffers from not discriminating its own nature from that of matter. Hence a man superimposes upon himself the results of action due to his connection with the body (matter) and is subject to the joys and woes of phenomenal life. So long as his desire for sensory or mental pleasures is unsubdued, he passes through birth and death continually and his release can occur only when the primal cause, namely desire, through want of discrimination, is removed by reflection and by consequent realisation of his really unattached nature as the soul or the spirit. Kapila was the founder of the School (date about 500 B. C.)

The primordial condition of matter, which is also eternal, is called Pradhana, which is a state of equilibrium of three Gunas, its constituents. Matter enables the soul (1) to experience joys and sorrows, and (2) to obtain Release from the

cycle of births and deaths. It provides him with a mind which originates feelings, volitions, and cognitions. Without the help rendered by Pradhana, neither our ordinary life with its emotions and activities, nor our power to reflect and understand would be explicable. The three Gunas of Pradhana are the elements of which it is made up. Of these the Sattva is that which tends to goodness, knowledge and enjoyment; the Rajas to action; and the Tamas to ignorance and inactivity. These tendencies are rooted in the respective Gunas. The mechanism of the mind as well as the structure of the external world proves that both are the effects of the all-pervading Gunas.

The creation of the world begins when the exactly balanced state becomes disturbed and the Gunas start their activity by combining with each other in all possible ways. When at last the activity ceases, the effects are re-absorbed in their ultimate causes, the Gunas, and a primordial condition, namely Pradhana, is reached. This is the state of dissolution, a complete rest of the Gunas, to be

followed as before by disturbance, activity and the resultant creation. The individual soul, however, has during the subsistence of the world infinite chances not only of experiencing perishable joys and sorrows but also of exercising its power of reflection and judgment, and realising its really unattached and pure nature, of effecting its escape from the Samsara. Thus eternal Matter works only to subserve the highest purpose of Life, namely, Release and Salvation.

### Criticism

This School of Thought leaves us helplessly in the conception of two equally abiding entities; the Soul and Matter. It is not intelligible why *Matter* should spontaneously work only in the best interests of the soul as if by an original contract, or why there should be *Matter* at all, an *embodiment* of the soul. Even if these entities are admitted to be beginningless and causeless, there must be some law by which the *relation* between the soul and matter and the behaviour of each can be defined and determined; and that that relation is one of ultimate benefit to the soul seems to be more a pious hope than a rational necessity. Besides the theory cannot satisfy the philosophical instinct in man which seeks a *single* principle that can explain all life.

When we dive into details, there are many important points craving an explanation. How is the equilibrium of the Gunas disturbed? Is the first shock communicated from without or from within? It cannot emanate from the soul which is pure consciousness not yet embodied, or from another source besides, as none other is admitted. Nor can the motion proceed from an impulse within the Gunas without a special change in them which pre-supposes a stimulus extraneous. If activity is an inherent tendency in the Gunas, then they must be eternally active and a state of rest or

equilibrium with which we start is inconceivable. Moreover, a permanent activity would obviate all chances of Release. Thus the initial activity becomes inexplicable, and without it the evolution of the world process is impossible.

While *Causality* is assumed, it is singular that Time is never taken into account or even recognised, which makes the system less precise than it could have been. Space likewise remains a grim uninvited guest demanding an adequate treatment. The original Avidya or Aviveka (want of discrimination) which is an inevitable death's head at the banquet of all systems of thought, Eastern or Western, is of course, left unaccounted for.

To make the first activity possible, which we found an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the Sankhyas who denied a transcendent Being, such as a God, another School arose known as the Sesvara Sankhyas who posited a Supreme Being in addition to the individual soul and primordial Matter. God as a conscious being was supposed to effect movement in the Gunas and release their tendencies to combine and evolve. This strategic position, however, brought no advantage and failed to heal the defect in the original conception. In the first place, the first School proceeded strictly on the basis of positive knowledge and the introduction of the transcendent entity ran counter to its spirit. In the next place, according to their theory, there cannot be a conscious being which is not embodied, and embodiment pre-supposes the activity of the Gunas to create the intellect or the physical body. For both the latter are products of evolution. Thus nothing is gained by positing a supreme conscious being or God beyond human experience. The first school, therefore, rejected the new idea altogether.

Although the system fails to be completely intelligible, it discloses many remarkable features. It is the first attempt made by the Hindus to steer clear of all allegiance to scriptural authority. It is the forerunner of the modern scientific desire to give the fullest scope for unaided effort towards grasping the first principle of life and piercing the veil of mystery surrounding it, armed only with reason, proceeding alone on the basis of experience, and carefully avoiding the pitfalls of sentiment and tradition. As the origination of life from matter was felt to be unimaginable, they rejected Monism with its time-honoured credentials, and boldly formulated two independent principles, the Soul and Matter. Still they could not get over the ancient idea that Life is a stage of suffering and they adopted the doctrines of Karma and re-birth which they admitted because the soul is eternal and the inequalities patent in life demanded a belief in them. Similarly they accepted the notion that Release was possible and desirable and they agreed with the Vedic dictum that it can be obtained by true knowledge, or discrimination between the nature of the soul and that of the Pradhana. They have wisely abstained from painting the joys of Release in flaunting colours of fancy, by the simple statement that the soul's final destiny is to enjoy its own pure and unalloyed bliss which it can claim by its very nature.

We should be unfair to the Sankhyas if we failed to say a few words on the perfection of its ethics. Since the soul is of a blissful nature, and its temporary

joys and sorrows arise from a wrong attachment to the body and the senses, a wise man, realising the purity of his nature, must overcome the attachment and the resultant selfishness. He must subdue his passions and live a life of self-denial, for he has a goal to attain to, *viz.*, complete detachment from everything which is a creature of the Gunas. With this self-discipline, evil ceases to be evil; and when life ends, he departs with gratitude for the kindly services of Matter, hurrying to taste the bliss of his disembodied nature. In this respect, one must observe that to the Sankhyas—the ancient scientific thinkers of India—Life presented an aim and a purpose. While the reality of Matter was unquestionable, its existence was regarded as something to be thanked for, not regretted. In the speculations of the modern scientist, we miss altogether the formulation of a similar aim.

Sankara seems to have been indebted to the Sankhyas for his idea of Adhyasa or superimposition. But to suit his undiluted Monism, he has improved upon it. To the Sankhya superimposition begins with the embodied soul, and the really pre-existent Gunas are fully active in the anterior stage. This would not do for Sankara who admitted no reality besides the Soul or Atman. Hence he lifted superimposition bodily and placed it over the heads of the Gunas themselves or the Pradhana. He alleged that the Pradhana itself was an unproven hypothesis, simply superimposed on the Atman. This speculative feat set a new line and direction to Indian Thought.

# AN EXPOSITION OF TANTRA SASTRA

By Thakur Brajmohan Singh, B.A., Bar-at-Law

(Continued from page 436)

## *The Vedanta, Sankhya and Tantra*

The Advaitavad Vedantist does not recognise the primordial root principle (मूलप्रकृति) or its product, which is the world, as having any substantial reality. In the eyes of the Tantravadin this power (शक्ति) both as consciousness (चिद्रूपिणी) and as the manifested Nature (मायारूपिणी) retains its real character. To be more clear: the 'power' whether taken as the material (उपादानकारण) or as the efficient cause (निमित्त कारण) or even as an effect which is the world itself, is real. Because the Hindu philosophers hold that effect is the same as the cause in a modified form (कारणभावाच्च १-११८ सां० सू०). The Sankhya system accepts two independent principles, namely, Nature (प्रकृति) and Spirit (पुरुष), which are both real and eternal. The Shaktas admit only one with dual aspects. That is, they posit both the principles in one inseparable whole. Vedanta rejects Nature as illusion; while Sankhya takes Nature as the material cause of this cosmic net work. Though soul is associated with Nature, the creative action rests with the latter. The presence of one (soul) cannot affect the properties of the other (Nature) <sup>19</sup>. The attribution of creation to soul is a false

notion. The Vedanta takes Nature as dependent upon Spirit (ब्रह्म). Kapila's world is real and eternal and so is his Purusha. The Prakriti of Sankhya is insentient.

In Shakta Darshana <sup>20</sup> the union of both the principles though they are never separate, gives rise to evolution. The Tantrik Shiva and the Sankhya's Purusha are unchanging realities. The Shakti of the Tantras, and Prakriti of Sankhya, when the Gunas of which it is composed are in a latent or equilibrium state, are also changeless and inert. The two principles of Sankhya remain separate. In Tantravada they are in constant union and exist as mere phases of one whole substance. The Sankhyas accept only twenty-five principles, while the Tantras speak of thirty-six.

## *Tantra and Shaiva Siddhanta*

It may be noted that the Shaiva Siddhanta of the Northern School of Kashmir, called *Trik Sampradaya* <sup>21</sup>, is not different from the Shakta School. The only difference between the two lies in the fact that the former worships the Shiva, while the latter the Shakti aspect of the same God. Just as the Shaktas are divided into several sects, so are the Shaivas. But the main school of Shaiva order is the one of Kashmir, which has elaborated an independent and fine system of Shaiva philosophy (पारमेश्वर दर्शन) based on Sruti. These 'Trikvadin', like the Shaktas, be-

19. प्रकृतिवास्तवे च पुरुषस्याध्यात्मसिद्धिः

(सांख्य सूत्र २-५)

अन्ययोगेऽपि तत्सिद्धिर्नास्त्येनायोदाहृत

(सां० सू० २-८)

शिवशक्तिसंयोगाज्जायते सृष्टिकल्पना

(शारदातिलक)

20. See also Shakti and Shakta by Sir John Woodroffe.

21. See J. C. Chatterjee's Kashmir Shaivism (Kashmir Series).

lieve in thirty-six Tattwas or principles as discussed at length in "Tantraloka," one of the most authoritative books on Tantra Sastra, in eight volumes, written by Abhinava Gupta (11th Century), a Kashmirian metaphysician of rare gifts. The Shaiva Darshaniks have beautifully carried on the analytical process from the 26th to 36th principle, which is clearly a development of Sankhya philosophy. In their brilliant exposition of the theory of evolution, they have shown how one single unchanging Reality, with a desire to become many <sup>22</sup> resolves itself into various forms of 'matter'—a process in which a subtle principle becomes grosser and grosser until we get to our material creation <sup>23</sup>. To explain the significance of each Tattwa fully and the part it plays in the cosmogony will far exceed the limitations of this paper. The object here is just to touch the mere fringe of some of the most important features of Agamic doctrines with a little detail here and a little there. Agama <sup>24</sup> by the way, is synonymous with Tantra. Let us for immediate purpose, at any rate, take it to mean as such. Really speaking, it is a comprehensive term and has various shades of meaning. The *Shaivagama* then further asserts that the unity of individual soul with Brahman the Supreme Spirit, is hampered by three kinds of impurities (मल) or impediments, known as atomic (अणव), illusory (मायीय), and pertaining to actions (कार्मिक). The end of Agamas is to help the Jiva to remove these obstructions

and to pave his or her way for final or ultimate union with God or Paramashiva, or Shiva or Shakti, no matter how we call it. We have thus examined briefly some of the main fundamental principles of three different important religious institutions, and also noted the points of their respective similarities and differences. We have also seen that the Tantras derive their teachings chiefly from the 'Advaitavada' of Vedanta School.

Now, to realise this unitary sublime conception of Vedantic tenets that we are no other than God Himself (अहं ब्रह्मास्मि; जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः) or Thou art That (तत्त्वमसि), is indeed the culminating point which the Hindu mind could aspire to reach in its Godward flight <sup>25</sup>. That He pervades the whole universe; that He is unknowable because he is subtle; that He looks as if divided, though indivisible, and that He is indestructible in the midst of destructible Creation; that He sees through all eyes; that He hears through all ears and so on—all these and similar other philosophic sermons contained in the Gita and the Upanishads are very easy to preach, but are extremely difficult to realise in life. The Tantras also, following the Advaitavada of Vedanta, aim at the ultimate acquisition of this supreme condition of human development <sup>26</sup> as a means to salvation from all worldly afflictions. So far this is all right.

But it is hardly possible for an average mind to meditate on the absolute and formless God, and to feel His unity with His multiple creation with any degree of success. To reach this stage, means a strenuous course of long sustained physical and moral discipline extending per-

22. एकोऽहम् बहुस्याम् प्रजायेय ।

23. For fuller details read षट्त्रिंशत्तत्त्व सन्दोह, by राजानकानन्द, पराप्रवेशिका by क्षेमराज, परशुरामकल्पसूत्र and others.

24. Read वाराही तंत्र, कुलार्थव तंत्र, योगिनी-तंत्र and others.

25. यत्क्षान्नात्रापरो लाभः यत्सुखान्नापर सुखः यज्ज्ञानान्नापरं ज्ञानं तद्भोग्येतिवधारयेत् ॥

26. भैरवोऽहम् शिरोऽहम् ॥ साहम् ॥ विश्वा-  
त्मिका शक्तिः ॥

haps to several years, or even births. That is, it is mostly unpracticable.

### *Path of Devotion*

So, to meet the spiritual necessity of men of common intelligence, our old Hindu sages (Rishis) or ancestors, mapped out a simpler, more comprehensible and more practical course of getting to the same final goal by gradual steps of training in the path of devotion. Lord Krishna also, realising the difficulty of concentration on the Absolute and unmanifest, gives preference to, and recommends, the method of worship as easier and more acceptable to the common run of humanity. <sup>27</sup> (Gita. XII, 5).

This path of worship or devotion is really a path of love. Devotion is not possible unless we have a feeling of attachment to the object of our devotion. As we progress in our course, this attachment develops into real love, which gets deeper and deeper until at last we reach a point where the distinction between the subject and the object is completely destroyed and we feel that we are "en-rapport" with the thing or the spirit behind it, which we have all this time been thinking as something different from our own self. Matter must see through matter. To know Brahman in the absolute sense, one must be like Brahman <sup>28</sup>. It will be no exaggeration to say that the Hindu religionists did really display a deep insight into human nature when they pointed out a method less difficult and more practical of gaining one unitary spiritual truth by means of dual experience. This is the Be-All and End-All

of all kinds of devotion (उपासना)<sup>29</sup>, no matter whether it is Shakta, Vaishnava or Shaiva. In fact it is the one and common goal of almost all the religious institutions of the Hindus which prepare the aspirant to comprehend the one golden Divine Truth, that this evident duality or even plurality is nothing more than unity. It is we who have invested it with a dual character which is essentially our own self reflected upon the vast plate of this cosmic mirror. If religion fails to bring home this open secret to the mind of the "Sadhaka" (practising aspirant) it falls far short of its objective, and cannot be called, or is not, at least, the Hindu religion. This is all the truth—the whole truth that we are enjoined to grasp and express in our existence upon this earthly planet, namely, to feel our oneness, which in essence is Divine, with the world around us. It is indeed the *summum bonum* of life, as it also is the highest aim of humanity. In other words, it means ultimate emancipation (मोक्ष) from all three kinds of pains that life is subject to<sup>30</sup>. Thus the Tantras also opened out two avenues of approaching the Temple of Truth—one of knowledge, for those who were enlightened and advanced; and the other of devotion, or love, for such as were on the threshold of spiritual experience, or just initiated, though a man was free to choose any of the two, or combine both according to his competence and choice. Properly speaking, 'the Tantra' is essentially a devotional (उपासना) Sastra, and is concerned mostly with matters of practical importance.

### *Peculiarities of Tantric Religion*

Some of the predominant features of Tantra Sastra are :

27. Cf. ईश्वरप्रणिधानाद्वा—यतजलिः

And

अन्यस्मान् सौलभ्यं भक्तौ (नारदभक्तिसूत्र ५८)

28. Cf. शिवो भूत्वा शिवं यजेत्; देवो देवमर्चयेत्

Or

ब्रह्मविद् ब्रह्मैव भवति (श्रुतिः)

29. See Shandilya and Narada Sutras.

30. अथ त्रिविधदुःखात्यन्तनिवृत्तिः अत्यन्त पुरुषार्थः (सां० सू० १-१)  
तरति शोकमात्मविद् ॥ (श्रुतिः)

1. As distinct from the Vedas, any man or woman irrespective of caste, creed, or nationality, is competent to follow the Tantrik religion ("सर्ववर्णाधिकाराश्च नारीणां योग्यमेव च"—गौतमीय तंत्र)

2. It hates and shuns vices, but admits the vicious, the depraved and the fallen into its fold.

3. It has a peculiar method of its own of uprooting evil by means of evil. Vices in this way are transformed into virtues, and virtue into strength \*\*.

4. It creates an interest (प्रवृत्ति) in the pursuits of life with an ultimate object of achieving final emancipation (निवृत्ति).

5. The Tantrik rituals, it can be said, are not much different from those of the Vedas except in certain particular cases. This is not the place where we can detail them at length, as they are elaborate and deserve special treatment. It fact almost every point discussed herein is worthy of exclusive and separate consideration.

6. It is a practical Sastra \*\*.

#### Scope of the Tantras

The Tantras deal with Law, Medicine, Physiology, Chemistry, Botany, Mantras, Yantras, Psychology, Astrology, Astronomy, Geography, Evolution, Legends, History, Science, Piety, Rites and Ceremonies, Sacred places, etc., etc. This will show how wide is the range of subjects covered by Tantrik literature.

81. येरेव पतनं द्रव्यैः सिद्धिस्तैरेव चोदिता

(कुला० तंत्र ५-४८)

भोगो योगायते सम्यक् दुष्कृतं सकृतायते ।

मोक्षायते च संसारः कुलधर्मे कुलेश्वरि ।

(कुला० २-२४)

82. कुलप्रमाणातां याति प्रत्यक्षफलदं यतः (कुला०)

#### Koulas

Now a word about the Koulas \*\*:—

The Koulas are Agama-Vadins. In common parlance, every follower of the Tantrik religion is called a Koula, though it is the highest degree of Tantrik Order.

We have said that apart from its theoretical value, the Tantras have infinite potentialities which can be harnessed to the service of mankind. But neglected and uncared for, they are undergoing gradual decay for some of the following reasons :—

1. Tantrik experts, though very few now, who really possess its secrets, are reluctant to communicate them to others. Sometimes their knowledge dies with them. Utmost secrecy, though permissible and even necessary in certain cases to a certain extent, has so greatly hampered the dissemination of Tantrik knowledge that it is almost impossible for an ardent lover of science to make any considerable headway in the field of experimental research.

2. It has been almost an invariable practice with the old Tantrik authors—evidently with a view to maintain the strictest possible secrecy—to write the Mantras and rituals, etc., in code words or cryptic language. We have no doubt the *Bijakosha*, but it lacks in general application. Because one single term is, in many instances, represented by more than one letter. Besides, each important Tantrik work is supposed to have a distinct *Bijakosha* which is commonly unobtainable. So, to say exactly what a particular term actually means, is sometimes more difficult than one can really imagine. Unless a man has an experience of Tantrik technicalities, he finds

83. सर्वेभ्यश्चोत्तमा वेदा वेदेभ्यो वैष्णवं परं ।

वैष्णवाद्भुतं शैवं शैवाद्द्विषामुत्तमम् ।

दक्षिणाद्भुतं कौलं कौलात् परतरं नहि ॥

(कुला० तंत्र)

himself practically at sea. We have no doubt commentaries. But in these, as also in several other matters, we have to look to such commentaries for help in vain for, unfortunately, we find that those who undertook the task of making the text easier for us, have made it still more difficult by either assuming a discreet silence over questionable points or referring us to similar other technicalities to which we are total strangers. Besides, it is not seldom when we are recommended for explanation to consult the Guru (Master). A Guru, in the true sense of the term, is a rare blessing, and can guide us efficiently if we are fortunate to get the right one. But he is not handy and to locate him is another difficulty. All such clever devices so resorted to by our annotators may either mean a concealed ignorance about the matter, or the self-same motive which actuated the original authors to draw a thick veil of mystery over many important subjects which could have practically promoted the cause of human happiness. Knowing, as I do, the arguments advanced in favour of *such* secrecy, I should be going beyond the scope of my present scheme if I were to give it a controversial shape which is not likely to serve any fruitful end. I do, however, think and feel that if the strictness of this principle had been somewhat relaxed, Tantrikism would have been almost the prevailing religion among all grades and classes of scientists of the day all the world over. In short, it has vitally affected the utility and main scheme of the *Agamas*.

3. Genuine Tantrik works, specially on Practical Science, are rare and obtainable with no little difficulty. Certain institutions in Bengal, Poona, Kashmir and Baroda have rendered inestimable service in this connection by bringing out excellent editions of some of the most important and valuable books on Tantrikism. Thus some solid work has

been done in this direction, but there is much more ahead which still remains to be done. Let me add that a vast portion of this literature still exists in the form of manuscripts scattered over different parts of India, Nepal in particular. The most unfortunate part about these manuscripts is that they are sometimes found in possession of such persons as are illiterate. They are lying with them in a frightful state of neglect and inattention. It is high time that we should try, as far as possible, to hunt up and reclaim all such ancient writings for publication, so as to save them from dying a natural death. It will, thus, be a rich contribution to our past, old and yet highly valuable literature. Our Indian states can, no doubt, do much in this direction.

4. Wrong notions about some of its rituals, which are alleged by opponents as Unvedic, have helped in creating an atmosphere prejudicial to its growth.

5. Last but not least is the lack of sufficient interest in things old. This has been the cause of decadence of not only the Tantras, but also of many other indigenous arts and sciences which had, at one time, been a glorious and fruitful monopoly of the Indian people. It is also seen that those who have a taste have sometimes neither the means nor opportunities to carry on a smooth and scientific investigation of such interesting subjects.

Let us not forget to mention in this connection the worthy name of an eminent Tantrik scholar, namely, Sir John Woodroffe, sometime Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, who with an extraordinary zeal and application has devoted very many years of his precious life to the study of Tantrik literature in its various aspects. He was the first among the Western scholars, who not only made a special, serious and unbiased study of this neglected Sastra, but also wrote out

a series of learned books, commentaries and treatises on the subject. By his rich and able contributions to this branch of oriental philosophy and religion, he has very greatly promoted the cause of Hindu culture. For these services, which are as great as they are unique, India will always remember him with a sense of profound love and gratitude.

#### *Conclusion*

We have tried to give here a *concise* presentation of some of the salient features of Tantrik teachings as found embodied in the Agama Sastra. Many questions of equal weight and significance had to be left out, as it was not possible to give them a condensed shape. Considering the extent and depth of the subject matter, proper justice has not been done to it. The object in writing these lines has been, however, mainly to create in the minds of the educated class, a real taste and desire for detailed study of the Tantra Sastra.

The following are some Tantrik subjects which may profitably be taken up for separate study:—1. Practical application of Tantra Sastra. 2. Sound—its

origin, colour and form. 3. Science of Language including chemistry of letters. 4. The "Swar-Vigyan," or the science of breath. 5. The Mantras and their powers. 6. The Yantras. 7. Medicines and their relation to Mantras. 8. Shat-Chakras or the six centres of Cosmic Energy. 9. Siddhis *i. e.*, acquisition of certain powers.

In its practical aspects, the 'Tantra Sastra' provides an extensive scope for search and research. Unless the theories are put to practical tests, we cannot decide one way or the other. To effect this end, some of us, at least, who may be qualified by reason of their education and experience, should come forward to pursue real scientific investigations of the subject with a view to demonstrate how far those facts are found practically possible today. The work is by no means easy; it would rather involve a great amount of sacrifice in several directions. However, no sacrifice is too great which can contribute to the enrichment of scientific acquisitions upon which the well-being and happiness of humanity as a whole so largely depends.

(concluded)

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

When one jar-enclosed space (Akasa) is contaminated with dust, smoke, etc., the other jar-enclosed spaces are not contaminated thereby. Similarly, the happiness etc., of one Jiva does not affect other Jivas. (5)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

Dualists may say: if one Atman resides in all bodies, then whatever

happens to one Atman, such as births, death, happiness, misery etc., must also be related to other Atmans and that actions and their results must become mixed up. The above verse is a reply to such an objection. Just as the dust and smoke contaminating the space enclosed in one jar have no effect on the spaces enclosed in other jars, so happiness etc., of one Jiva do not affect other Jivas.

(An opponent says): Is not Atman one only? (It is replied) True. Did

you not hear our saying that like Akasa, there is only one Atman in all bodies? (The opponent says): If the Atman is one only, then he must in all places be subject to happiness and misery. (The reply is): This objection cannot be raised by one holding the Sankhya doctrine, according to which happiness and misery cannot be predicated to Atman but are said to be related to Buddhi (intellect). Even Vedantins do not hold that Atman is subject to happiness or misery. There is no authority for creating in (or superimposing on) the Atman of the nature of Consciousness, any variety. It may be said that in the absence of variety, Pradhana cannot possibly work for the sake of another (that is, Purusha): but this is not so, for any action of Pradhana cannot bear any kind of relation to Purusha (Atman). If the bondage and release created by Pradhana, had reference to different Purushas, it would have been inappropriate to predicate the action of Pradhana to one Purusha only and it would be necessary to formulate variety of Purushas. But the Sankhyas do not hold that bondage or release, due to the activity of Pradhana, has any relation to Purushas, as according to them, Atmans, that is Purushas, have no differentiations at all and are of the nature of pure Consciousness. Therefore it is settled that Sankhyas attribute the activity of Pradhana to the mere presence of Purusha and not to any differentiation or variety in Purushas. There is thus no reason to hold that the activity of Pradhana for the sake of another, is for the purpose of creating a variety of Purushas. There is no other kind of authority for Sankhyas to create differentiations among Purushas. Pradhana enjoys both bondage and release, taking the mere presence of another (Purusha) apart from itself, as the instrumental cause.

The mere presence of another (Purusha) of the nature of pure Consciousness, is taken to be the exciting cause of the activity of Pradhana, and not any kind of variety (in the nature of Purushas). The assumption of the variety of Purushas, giving up the proper meaning of the Vedas, is due to more stupidity. (If properly understood, the doctrine of Sankhya is purely Advaitic or non-dual. The Sankhyas do not admit any relation between Purusha and misery or happiness.) Vaiseshikas and others say that Atman is inseparably united with desire etc. This is not right, because the impressions which are the cause of memory cannot have any relation with Atman who is devoid of space (parts or magnitude) (which are necessary before any relation can be entered into). As memory arises from the union of Atman and mind, there should not be any rule (that a particular memory must arise at a particular time). Moreover, all memories might arise at one and the same time. Also Atmans who are devoid of qualities such as touch &c., belonging to a different class, cannot fittingly have any relation with mind and such other things. Moreover, (according to Vaiseshikas) apart from substance (Atman here) there can be neither qualities, action, generic and special attributes and relation. If qualities can exist independent of substance and if desire &c., (can exist) independent of Atman, there can never subsist any relation between these and substance. It cannot be contended that in the cases of those whose substances and attributes are inseparable, it is possible to predicate inseparable union (Sannavaya), for desire &c., are transient (not permanent) and the eternal Atman different from them, is antecedent to them and there can be no such thing as inseparable union between substance and attributes (Ayutasiddhi). Moreover if desires &c.,

are in eternal union with Atman, they must be as eternal as Greatness (Mahatva, one of the attributes of Atma according to Vaiseshikas). This is not acceptable (either to Vaiseshikas or Vedantins) as it would deny release (Moksha) (to Atman) (as he would ever be subjected to happiness and misery). If inseparable union, (Samavaya) is something different from substance (Dravya), a new relation should be predicated between them, as is done in the case of substance and qualities (Dravya and Gunas). (If you object) that a new relation need not be predicated as Samavaya itself is inseparable union (we reply that) in the case of substances having Samavaya, there can be no separation one from the other, on account of the inseparable union. If they are absolutely distinct from each other, it would be meaningless to use the possessive case, implying the possession by the substances, of the attributes, such as substances having touch or having no touch. If Atman possesses attributes such as desires which are liable to origin and destruction, he would also become impermanent (Anitya). Having parts and being subject to change, like the body and the results of action (Phala) &c., the faults of (the Atman) being like the body &c., cannot be overcome.

Just as Akasa is believed to be soiled with dust, smoke &c., superimposed on it through wrong knowledge (Avidya), similarly happiness, misery &c., are superimposed on Atman through wrong knowledge (Avidya) creating mind and other limitations. In this state (of superimposition, that is, in the experience of the wakeful condition) there is nothing wrong in attributing bondage, liberation &c., to Atman.

All disputants are agreed in accepting the experience of the waking state, due to the activity of Avidya, but nobody holds that the true Reality (Atman) is only as

real (as Vyavahara). So the theory of the multiplicity of Atmans has been uselessly formulated by the logicians (such as Sankhyas, Vaiseshikas &c).

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Form, action and name may be different here and there. But there is no difference in Akasa. Similarly, in the case of Jivas, the same will hold good. (6)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

(If you ask) how experience which depends on the variety of Atmans (Jivas), can be said to be due to the superimposition of variety on one Atman, by wrong knowledge (Avidya), we reply : In this world Akasa is one, but on account of its being enclosed in different articles such as a large jar, a small jar, a house &c., it comes to be spoken of as being big or small, according to the form it is supposed to assume. Again, it serves different purposes and looks different in our experience, according as its action is "fetching water," "storing water," "living purposes" &c., and according to the names given to it as "Akasa in a jar," "Akasa in a small jar" &c. Our varying experiences due to the variety of form etc. in Akasa, are not really to be found there (in Akasa). If we consider Akasa from the true point of view, there will be no variety at all, in it. Our experience depending on the (seeming) variety in Akasa, is simply due to the limitations superimposed on it (in the form of jars, &c). Similarly the Jivas, differentiated one from another by the limitations of their bodies, are in the same position as the spaces (Akasa) enclosed in jars &c. Therefore, wise people have considered all this deeply and have come to the conclusion that Atman is all one (without any differentiation).

*Gaudapada's Karika*

The jar-enclosed space (Akasa) is not a modification of (Maha) Akasa, nor is it a part of it. Similarly the Jiva is neither a modification of Atman nor a part of it. (7)

*Sankara's Commentary*

To the question, whether the jar-enclosed spaces &c., giving rise to our varied experiences due to form, action (purpose) &c., are not real modifications, we reply, no; for the jar-enclosed spaces are not real modifications of (Maha)

Akasa, in the same way as gold ornaments are of gold; or foam, bubbles and snow are of water. There are also no parts (of Mahakasa) as the branches and other organs are parts of a tree. Thus a jar-enclosed space is neither a modification of Akasa nor a part of it. Similarly, the Jiva who is compared to a jar-enclosed space in the illustration, is never and nowhere, a modification of or a part of the supreme Atman (Paramatman) who is compared to the unchanging Mahakasa in the illustration. Therefore the experiences depending on the appearances of variety of Jivas, is unreal.

JANAKA'S EXAMPLE

*By Nirodh Kar*

SOME modern Indian thinkers are of opinion that monasticism is at the root of most of our present ills. Those who became monks, they say, ought to have remained in society and taught the rest such subjects as military tactics, economics and industries. It is because they failed to do this and withdrew from active participation in society's affairs that Alexander and a long line of foreign conquerors subjugated us and brought us to our present plight. As the next step in the argument they hold up the example of King Janaka and declare that there is something radically wrong in monasticism, Janaka's method of "work" being quite sufficient—and in many respects quite superior—for achieving the *summum bonum* of life, namely supreme Knowledge. Witness Mahatmaji, his work and his eminence: this completes the argument.

We see as clearly as any one else that the more Janakas we have in our midst the better and stronger our country will become. But what we wish to point out here is just one point alone, *viz.*, that the example of Janaka" is somewhat

vague and misleading. Granting that one Janaka who followed the path of "work" attained illumination, are we sure we possess all the implications of this term "work" in order to pronounce judgment upon "other" paths? Let us refer to the very Mahabharata which speaks of Janaka's wisdom attained through "work"<sup>1</sup> and enlarge our vision by studying two incidents connected with Mithila's ruler who sang: "My treasures are immense, yet I have nothing. If again the whole of Mithila were burnt and reduced to ashes, nothing of mine will be burnt."<sup>2</sup>

Santi Parva, Chapter CCCXXII shows Yudhishtira asking Bhishma how Suka, son of Vyasa, in days of old, was won over to Renunciation. The previous chapter leads up to this topic and begins with the question whether any one ever attained emancipation without abandon-

1. कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः

Gita, III, 20.

2. अनन्तं बत मे वित्तं यस्य मे नास्ति किञ्चन ।

मिथिलायां प्रदीप्तायां न मे दहति किञ्चन ॥

Santi Parva XVII, 19.

ing the domestic mode of life. By way of reply Bhishma narrates the conversation between 'Janaka the King' and Sulabha the Sannyasini. To test how much Janaka had advanced, Sulabha assumed the form of a youthful maiden and visited the palace. By her Yoga power she then entered into the understanding of the King<sup>3</sup>. Janaka discovered this move of the visitor and in the presence of all his courtiers gave her a stern rebuke. He accused her, among other things, of "touching" his person against the rules of morality, of attempting a "mingling of castes," of a vicious desire to "test" others and to prove her superiority over them<sup>4</sup>—all contrary to the nun's life she was professing to follow. He then proudly referred to himself as the beloved disciple of "Panchasikha of the mendicant order<sup>5</sup>" and proclaimed how by remaining in the domestic mode of life, as his Guru laid down for him, he had become the possessor and the best teacher of emancipation and Knowledge<sup>6</sup>, which she, although wearing the outward symbols of Sannyasa, had failed to achieve. "That high intelligence," he said, "has been acquired by me, and accordingly I have transcended all pairs of opposites. Even in this life I have been freed from *stupefaction* and attachments<sup>7</sup>".

3. सुलभा तस्य धर्मेण मुक्तो नेति ससंशया ।

सत्त्वं सत्त्वेन योगज्ञा प्रविश्या महीपतेः ॥

Santi, CCCXXI, 16.

4. न मध्येवाभिसन्धिस्ते जयैषियया जये कृतः ।

येयं मत्परिषत् कृत्स्ना जेतुमिच्छसि तामपि ॥

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5. भिक्षोः पञ्चशिखस्याहं शिष्यः परमसम्मतः ॥

24

6. गस्य नान्यः प्रवक्तास्ति मोक्षं तमपि मे

शृणु ॥ 23

7. सेयं परमिका बुद्धिः प्राप्ता निर्वन्दता मया ।

इहैव गतमोहेन चरता मुक्तसङ्गिना ॥ 81

Before telling what reply Sulabha gave, Bhishma makes a brief and significant comment: "Though rebuked by the King in these unpleasant, improper and ill-applied words, the lady Sulabha was not at all abashed (न व्यक्रम्यत)." On the other hand that beautiful one (चारुदर्शना) addressed him in words "that were more handsome than her person (तत्तद्व्यवहारं वाक्यं)." If the King were really emancipated, argued she, how was it that he still maintained the distinctions of *his* body, *her* body, etc? If he had known the Soul and Prakriti aright, he would certainly not have asked her repeatedly *who* she was<sup>8</sup>. If he was really freed from all his bodily and mental attachments, as he vaunted he was, how could he accuse her of trespassing into *his* understanding and of thereby violating her vows of Sannyasini's life? Being a Sannyasini, she was certainly right in occupying "empty" abodes; and evidently King Janaka's understanding *was* empty, emancipated or otherwise! With this she turned the tables upon the king and asked, "Hast thou heard the religion of emancipation in its entirety from the lips of Panchasikha with its means, its methods and its conclusions?" It would seem not; she was inclined to think that he had "not listened to the scriptures or had listened to them without any advantage, or perhaps listened to some other treatises looking like scriptures<sup>9</sup>." This narration over, Bhishma concluded with the remark: "Hearing these words fraught with excellent sense and with reason, King Janaka failed to return any answer

8. इदं मे स्यादितं नेति द्वन्द्वैशुकस्य मैथिल ।

कासि, कस्य, कुतोवेति वचनैः किं प्रयोजनं ॥

9. ननु नाम त्वया मोक्षः कृत्स्नः पञ्चशिखात्

श्रुतः ।

श्रुतं ते न श्रुतं मन्त्रे, दृष्टा वापि श्रुतं श्रुतम्

अथवा श्रुतसङ्काशं श्रुतमन्यद् श्रुतं त्वया ॥

thereto." Well then, this Janaka's path of "work" first took shape under the inspiration of the mendicant Panchasikha; and when pride was waxing and introspection waning the mendicant Sulabha—towards whom he behaved in an improper manner—applied the necessary correction.

Let us turn to another scene (Santi Parva, Chapter XVIII). It is well known how Yudhishtira wanted to retire into the forest, unable to bear the thought of having achieved a victory after slaying his kith and kin. All the brothers then argued with him to show that he should not do so; and Arjuna too had his say. Arjuna, we find, began by referring to what the "grief-stricken spouse" of 'Janaka, the wise,' told him when he had determined to abandon his kingdom and lead a life of mendicancy. "Casting off wealth and children and wives and precious possessions of various kinds, the established path for acquiring religious merit and Fire itself, *King Janaka shaved his head* and assumed the garb of a mendicant<sup>10</sup>!" His wife then argued with him; and curiously enough most of the modern arguments against monastic life are there. She too tells that mendicancy might be followed by those persons that are desirous of happiness but are very poor, indigent and abandoned by friends! Salvation, she says, is doubtful (संशयिते मोक्षे). If the kingdom and a handful of barley are the same, then why, says she, should Janaka *renounce* the one and accept the other? Is not barley itself an object of attachment; and is he right in casting his eyes about for a handful of it like a dog (श्ववत् संप्रति वीक्ष्यसे)? Is that consistent with his professed renunciation? And so on. She, however, wishes the king to earn

religious merit by supporting the truly pious among men of matted locks or clean-shaven heads, naked or clad in rags or skins or brown robes. (These all moderns of course may not approve.)

After giving all the arguments put forward by the Queen, Arjuna adds a comment: "King Janaka is regarded to have been a truth-knowing person in this world. Even he, in this matter (of shaving his head, etc. as part of mendicant's life) had become *stupefied*. Therefore, do not yield to stupefaction, O brother."

The previous instance showed Janaka boasting of his knowledge and *freedom from stupefaction*, but unable to answer the mendicant woman. In the second instance we find Arjuna asserting that Janaka did take to the mendicant's life and *wastherein stupefied*. Is this, or are these, the self-same Janaka of the "example"? Are there many Janakas, all rulers of Mithila and *equally* noted for their "path of work" and illumination through work? Which Janaka's example is then to be followed? Of the one who by his silence admitted before the mendicant Sulabha that he had not fully grasped the import of the teachings of the mendicant Panchasikha? Or, of the one who shaved his head and left his kingdom and, in the eyes of Arjuna and of the Queen of Mithila, *became stupefied* after he had already established a reputation as the possessor of highest knowledge? And as for the illumination attained, if we are to take the example of the work "aspect," are we justified in rejecting (a) the actual shaving of the head, or (b) the interventions of a male mendicant to start and inspire the "work" and of a female mendicant to correct the faults which crept in, in the case of *some* Janakas, even?

10. धनान्यपत्यं दारांश्च रत्नानि विविधानि च ।  
पन्थानं पावकं हित्वा जनको भौएह्यमा-  
स्थितः ॥ XVIII, 4.

11. तत्वज्ञो जनको राजा लोकेऽस्मिन्निति गीयते ।  
सोऽप्यस्मिन्मोहसम्पन्नो, मा मोहवशमन्वगाः

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE RURAL COMMUNITY AND THE SCHOOL:** By G. S. Krishnayya, Published by the Association Press, 5 Russel Street, Calcutta. Price Re. 1-4-0.

The author has done a signal service by the publication of this extremely valuable book. He has herein made sincere attempts to come to an effective solution of the most intricate problems of India such as ill health, poverty, ignorance, superstition, unproductive agriculture and inefficient house-keeping, which stand in the way of her progress. For this purpose he has placed before the readers the results of the thorough study he has made of three important institutions developed in America under similar conditions, viz., the Penn, the Berry, and the Tuskegee Schools, which aim chiefly at the production of better citizens, by opening to them the "Gate of Opportunities," by providing them with better education, the advantages of better farms, better homes and better health. These show unmistakably that the work of rural reconstruction in India, however difficult it appears to be, is not an impossible task after all. What is needed is a thorough realisation of the gravity of the situation; still more important—'love for the unlovely, the lowly and the lost.' People must be made to understand that such education as will create citizens of the right type, prepare them for country life, create a new attitude towards work, build character, develop rural leadership and promote community spirit, should deserve the highest encouragement.

F. L. Brayne, Esq., I. C. S., in his Foreword, specially emphasises that "the village school will be the centre of a new village and supply the cohesion, initiative and knowledge required for the great task of rural reconstruction." To the realisation of this noble ideal, this handy volume will certainly be a valuable help. The numerous pictures add to the value of the book.

**YOGA AND PERFECTION (ENGLISH) & PURNA JYOTI (SANSKRIT):** By Swami Purnananda of Hrishikesh. Published by Matilal Sen, B.A., Chak Bazaar, Barisal.

These are both written in verses. The subject matter is not, and of course cannot be, anything new. The author's share lies in harmonising the various paths, avoiding controversies and in presenting the principles in a lucid manner. The careful reader can find out that the author has conceived Yoga in a most comprehensive way. Says he: "Sacrifice thyself to all, To the world, to Lord withal, Serve thou selfless, serve thou all, Serve the Lord, serve Him in all." In what ways one is to serve all, has not been described, that being beyond the scope of the books. How to perfect the psycho-physical mechanism with which the service is to be done; how to clear its vision—these alone form the aim of the author. In Purna Jyoti, the Swami himself has added a paraphrase in Sanskrit for the benefit of the readers who may not be proficient in the language.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Swami Paramananda in Madras

Swami Paramanandaji, Head of the Vedanta Centre at Boston and Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, Los Angeles County, U.S.A., arrived in Madras on Sunday the 26th March, accompanied by Srimati Charushila Devi and Sister Satya Prana. That evening the Swamiji spoke about some of his experiences in the West to a large number of devotees and friends who assembled in the hall of the Math at Mylapore to hear him. On

the 29th evening an address was presented to him by the public of Madras, under the presidency of Sir P. S. Sivashwami Aiyar, K.C.S.I., C.I.E. The Swamiji gave a suitable reply and spoke on "The Need of the Hour." On the 30th the party left for Bangalore and Mysore whence they will return to Madras on the 4th April. They are expected to leave for Colombo on the next day. From there the Swamiji would be sailing on the 10th instant for America via Europe.

Recd. on **20 JUN 1963**

R. R. No

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